

The Editor's Bookshelf

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ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Head MG, Fitchett JR, Cooke MK, *et al.* **Differences in research funding for women scientists: a systematic comparison of UK investments in global infectious disease research during 1997–2010.** *BMJ Open* 2013;3(12):e003362

The authors investigated funding awards to UK institutions for all infectious disease research from 1997 to 2010 through a systematic comparison of awards by sex. Results showed consistent differences in funding received by men and women, with women having fewer funded studies and receiving less funding in absolute. These differences remained broadly unchanged over the 14-year study period.
doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2013-003362

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Drouart M (*Ed.*) **Editing across borders: papers from the 6th IPEd National Editors Conference, 10-12 April 2013, Perth, Western Australia.**

Online proceedings of a Conference on editing held in April 2013 in Perth, Western Australia, by the Society of Editors (West Australia) and the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd), the 6th IPEd National Editors Conference. They include some top-quality papers on editing across cultural borders, editing skills, editorial workflows, creating a magazine, and much more.

Willey I, Tanimoto K. **“Convenience editors” as legitimate participants in the practice of scientific editing: an interview study.** *Journal of English for Academic Purposers* 2013;12(1):23-32
This study explored how English

teachers who regularly edited healthcare-related texts learned the “craft” of scientific editing. The authors interviewed English-teaching editors of scientific texts written by Japanese authors, with a focus on these editors’ initial difficulties with editing and how editors overcame these difficulties. Results indicate that some issues are of potential significance to these English teachers, such as the various styles and terminology of medical academic writing; authors’ involvement in the editing process; and early apprenticeship or immersion experiences.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Bailey J. **Defending against plagiarism.** *The Scientist Magazine* June 1, 2013

Retractions in academic publishing have skyrocketed-up 10-fold in the past three decades, with plagiarism and duplication at the root of about 25% of those retractions. Why doesn’t every organization employ active defences against plagiarism? There is no reason why readers should discover plagiarism before a publication’s editor does. Publications that use plagiarism-detection software tools (that are well tested, available, and simple to use) have seen retractions decrease.

Bornmann L. **Research misconduct - definitions, manifestations and extent.** *Publications* 2013;1(3):87-98

This article provides an overview of what research misconduct is generally understood to be, its manifestations and the extent to which they are thought to exist. While every spectacular case of fraud discovered and discussed in the public media seriously damages the trust placed in science, it is almost impossible to estimate the extent of the risk posed by more minor transgressions to the progress of scientific knowledge.
doi: 10.3390/publications1030087

Fanelli D. **Redefine misconduct as distorted reporting.** *Nature* 2013;494:149

Only the most egregious cases of misconduct are discovered and punished. Publication, peer-review and misconduct investigations should focus less on what scientists do, and more on what they communicate. A good start would be to redefine misconduct as distorted reporting. In addition, the main task of journal editors and referees would be to ensure that researchers comply with reporting guidelines, and if the authors refuse or were unable to comply, their paper should be rejected.
doi: 10.1038/494149a

McMurdo M. **Clinical research must include more older people.** *BMJ* 2013;346:f3899

For years older people have been systematically excluded from clinical research, with those older than 85 years particularly under-studied. Most research is still done on younger adults, often male, with single diseases and minimal comorbidity. According to the author, funders, ethics committees, and journals must stop older people being under-represented, and more clinical trials should embrace the heterogeneity and multimorbidity of old age in their study designs and funding. Ethics committees should reject all proposals with arbitrary upper age limits, and journals should do likewise.
doi: 10.1136/bmj.f3899

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Gasparyan AY. **Bibliographic databases: some critical points.** *Journal of Korean Medical Science* 2013;28(6):799-800

Though most authors and editors are aware of the existence of databases and communication platforms, not all of them are skilled at retrieving essential information and distinguishing ‘indexed’ journals. They should know indexing criteria, advantages and limitations of databases as well as continuous efforts to expand and maintain the visibility of their journals in the highly prestigious databases. These

skills can also avoid manipulations aimed at attracting quality articles to substandard journals.
doi: 10.3346/jkms.2013.28.6.799

Hahnel M. **The reuse factor.** *Nature* 2013;502:298

The majority of scientists still consider journal articles to be the only valid, formal record of their research. The author has set up a company, figshare, to make research data reusable, reproducible, and interactive. He believes that referencing is not dead, but it is exploding to encompass the full spectrum of research outputs from lines of code to video frames. Scientists should appreciate that making their research outputs citable enables their research to have quantifiable impact.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Grant MJ. **What makes a good title?** *Health Information and Library Journal* 2013;30:259-260

A good title should be both informative and specific, using words or phrases likely to be used when searching for information; it should be concise yet convey the main ideas clearly, as articles with short titles reporting study findings have been found to attract higher numbers of viewing and citations. Then, it should provide details of the study design to assist the reader in making an informed choice about the type of project the article is reporting.
doi: 10.1111/hir.12049

PUBLISHING

Boissier MC. **Benchmarking biomedical publications worldwide.** *Rheumatology* 2013;52(9):1545-1546.

The volume of science as evaluated by the number of publications is increasing 10-fold every 50 years, and the number of scientific journals doubled every 13 years on average. This growth is driven in part by emerging countries such as China, India, Brazil, South Korea, Turkey and Taiwan. The global number of publications reflects the prominence of a country in

the worldwide scientific landscape, which has obvious implications both for the development of worldwide strategies and for intellectual property issues. The ratio of the number of publications over the size of the population is an index of the scientific productivity of a community and can be used to benchmark countries in terms of what a group of researchers is actually accomplishing.
doi: 10.1093/rheumatology/ket181

Callaway E. **Preprints come to life.** *Nature* 2013;503:180

BioRxiv is a free online archive and distribution service for unpublished preprints in the life sciences. It operates similarly to arXiv, with scientists depositing papers as soon as they are ready to share them, weeks or months before their publication. By posting preprints on bioRxiv, authors are able to make their findings immediately available to the scientific community and receive feedback on draft manuscripts before they are submitted to journals. This website leaves journals divided, with many of them having changed their policies in recent months to allow the practice.

Dobbins M. **BMJ Case Reports.**

Journal of the Medical Library Association 2013;101(1):80

BMJ Case Reports is an electronic journal that provides a collection of peer-reviewed case reports in all disciplines for health care professionals and researchers. Cases come from 70 countries and articles cover both common and rare diseases. The resources available through this journal are easy to find and are presented logically. All its characteristics and functions are described in detail.
doi: 10.3163/1536-5050.101.1.016

Grant SP, Mayo-Wilson E, Melendez-Torres GJ, *et al.* **Reporting quality of social and psychological intervention trials: a systematic review of reporting guidelines and trial publications.** *PLoS One* 2013;8(5):e65442

Reporting guidelines have improved the quality of trial reports in

medicine, yet existing guidelines have important limitations in content, development, and/or dissemination and they may not be fully suited for social and psychological intervention trials. Important details are routinely missing from trial publications and most leading journals in social and behavioural sciences do not ask authors to follow reporting standards. Findings demonstrate a need to develop a CONSORT extension with updated standards for social and psychological intervention trials.
doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0065442

Xu L, Fang Q. **Internationalization of Chinese STM journal publishing.**

Publishing Research Quarterly 2013;29(2):190-196

Over the past two decades, China has witnessed an international development of its scientific, technological and medical (STM) journals. This has enhanced journals' editorial forces, it has established a quality-control mechanism centred around peer reviews, and it has internationalized both the journal publishers' productions and services. Under the above-mentioned endeavours, Chinese STM journal publishing has achieved its initial internationalization progress.
doi: 10.1007/s12109-013-9309-4

RESEARCH EVALUATION

Brembs B, Button K, Munafò M. **Deep impact: unintended consequences of journal rank.**

Frontiers in Human Neuroscience 2013;7:291

In this review, authors present the most recent and pertinent data on the consequences of institutionalizing journal rank as an impact measure. They argue that a higher journal ranking does not always point to greater scientific impact, and that universities may have hired and promoted researchers who were savvy at getting their articles published in top journals though their research was iffy, and removed researchers who were not that savvy.
doi: 10.3389/fnhum.2013.00291

De Castro P, Calzolari A, Napolitani F, *et al.* **Open data sharing in the context of bioresources.**

Acta Informatica Medica

2013;21(4):291-292

The BRIF (Bioresource Research Impact Factor) project aims to create suitable methods to recognize and measure the use and impact of biological resources in scientific/academic work, in order to maximize access by researchers to collections of biological materials and attached databases, and to recognize efforts involved in their maintenance. The BRIF initiative can be considered as a tool to facilitate research resource sharing.

doi: 10.5455/aim.2013.21.291-292

Sangwal K. **Citation and impact factor distributions of scientific journals published in individual countries.** *Journal of Informetrics* 2013;7(2):487-504

Citation distribution of journals published in individual countries is a subject which has not been investigated so far. The aim of the paper is three-fold: to analyze the distribution of citations, two- and five-year impact factors and citation half-lives of journals published in different selected

countries using the newly proposed Langmuir-type function and its modification; to investigate the physical significance of the effectiveness parameter α of this function; and to trace a relationship, if any, between the Langmuir constant K of the distributions and the number N of journal published in different countries
doi: 10.1016/j.joi.2013.01.011

SCIENCE

Abramo G, D'Angelo CA, Murgia G. **Gender differences in research collaboration.** *Journal of Informetrics* 2013;7(4):811-822

The issue of gender aspects in research collaborations has been treated in a marginal manner. In this article the authors apply an innovative bibliometric approach, that is the measurement of gender differences in the propensity to collaborate by fields, disciplines and forms of collaboration: intramural, extramural domestic and international. The analysis of the scientific production of Italian academics shows that women researchers register a greater capacity to collaborate in all the forms analyzed, with the exception of international collaboration, where

there is still a gap in comparison to male colleagues.

doi: 10.1016/j.joi.2013.07.002

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Kermani F, Fürst W, Billiones R. **Potential implications of wider data transparency in medical communications.** *Medical Writing* 2013;22(2):128-130
(doi: 10.1179/2047480613Z.000000000113)

The current medical communication environment is characterized by growing calls for increased data transparency and for improvement of access to unpublished data results. There are ongoing concerns about the selective publication of trial results and the potential impact on use of medicines by prescribers and patients in both Europe and the US. This article outlines some of the background to current developments and considers the potential impact on those working in the field of medical communications.

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Façade of the Library of Celsus in Ephesus (135 AD). The Library stored 12,000 scrolls. It was destroyed by an earthquake in 262 AD, but still remains a relatively well preserved model of Roman ancient libraries. Courtesy of A.Y.Gasparyan.