

On the “Citation Culture”

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Abstract

The “citation culture” continues to grow as a systemic problem for the academic research, in general, and scientific publishing in particular. Contrary to popular beliefs, the number of citations, while useful as tracking tool, is often irrelevant in assessing the long-term viability of scientific publications or lines of enquiry [1].

Einstein’s revolutionary paper on Special Relativity contains no references to previous works. By contrast, two trendy models in high-energy theory (the Randall-Sundrum scenario and the ADD hypothesis of large extra-dimensions) have respectively received 6325 and 5215 citations, up to the end of 2014 [2]. Note that both models are currently disfavored by experimental data and, in our view, likely to be falsified in the upcoming years.

[1] <http://www.int-res.com/abstracts/esep/v8/n1/p13-16/>

[2] <http://inspirehep.net/info/hep/stats/topcites/2014/alltime.html>