The probability of publishing in first-quartile journals

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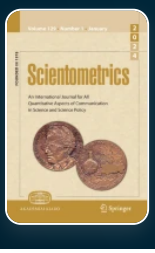

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Abstract

As an alternative metric of journal impact factor (JIF), journal impact factor quartile is increasingly adopted to compare the research impact of journals within and across different domains. We adopt both optimistic and pessimistic approaches to illustrate the JIF distributions of journals listed in the 2015 Journal Citation Reports. We find that at least one-third of Web of Science publications are actually published in the first quartile (high impact factor journals). In comparison, at most 16.5 % of publications are published in the fourth quartile (low impact factor journals). We argue that Bornmann and Marx's (Scientometrics 98(1):487–509, 2014) claim that "One can expect that 25 % of a researcher's publications have been published in the first quartile" is not precise.

Notes

1. For more precise calculation of the JIF quartiles please refer to: http://ipscience-help.thomsonreuters.com/incitesLive/9053-TRS.html.

2. Citable items denote articles and reviews. In this letter, only these two document types are considered.

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