

WHAT ARE EXPECTATIONS FOR JOURNALS FOR SCOPUS DATABASE?

Peter Brimblecombe

School of Energy and Environment
City University of Hong Kong

10 January 2020

The 13th TCI Symposium on Thai Scholarly Journals on the 4th Re-evaluation
Results of Thai Journals and Impacts /Visibilities of Fast-Track Indexing System

ARTICLE vs JOURNAL

- Author – Editor
- Experienced researchers -
experienced editors
- Introduction – Aims&Scope
- Citations – *CiteScore/ImpactFactor*

EVALUATING JOURNALS

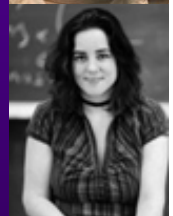
- Bibliometricians
 - qualitative, rather objective, focusses on metric issues
- Subject editors
 - can focus on relationships within discipline, recognises outliers and eccentric and narrow focus journals

**TYPICALLY A STEP
MIX OF BOTH**

3

THE CONTENTS SELECTION ADVISORY BOARD

- The Content Selection Advisory Board works with 17 subject chairs
- They make the day-to-day decisions about admission to SCOPUS
- Meets twice a year to consider strategic issues



SUBJECT CHAIR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



- Environmental journal character
 - Very broad topic area
 - How do you judge quality?
 - Yet probably an issue with all topic areas

Reflects my own experiences...

KEY AREAS OF EVALUATION

- Journal policy
- Content quality
- Journal standing
- Regularity
- Online availability

...developed within Scopus, but typical of approaches to journal evaluation...

ONLINE AVAILABILITY

- Usually check this first
- Try and download some published MSS, not always those chosen by the editor for assessment
- The appearance and ease of use of the website is not typically a critical factor in decision making

My assessment often more generous than the internal one...

JOURNAL POLICY SCOPE

ALLOWS A FORWARD LOOK

- Sometimes be just a vague statement -journal rapidly publishes high quality articles
- The area is sometimes so broad as to have no niche to occupy
- Sometimes no clarity about why an author would choose to publish there
- Ethics increasingly important

Journal of Rubber Research
Malaysian Rubber Board

International Journal of Entomology and Zoology

JOURNAL POLICY –

STRUCTURE OF BOARD - ORGINS OF AUTHORS
REFEREE PROCESS

- Journal may claim to be international, yet editors/authors are drawn from one country
- Editor status/expertise
- Regional journals do best if the attempt to link with wider international audience
- Narrow authorship appropriate for a region?
- Yet some exceed such expectations

Malaysian Polymer Journal
Plastics Rubber Institute of Malaysia

LOCAL JOURNALS



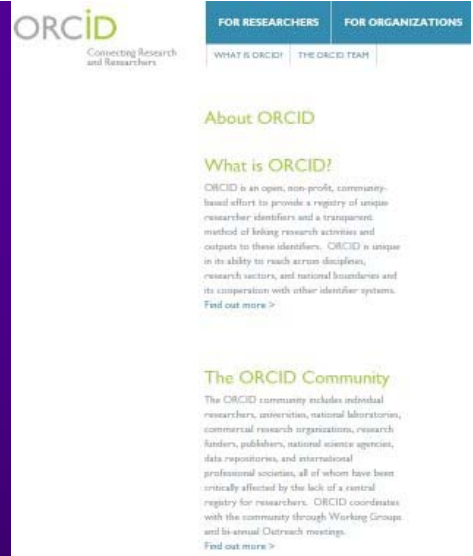
INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER

- Show importance within a region
- Focus on local strengths and knowledgeable authors
- Distinctiveness/focus in the face of local competition
- Need for ISSN

*Assessment of quality needs to recognise
relevance both locally and beyond*

AUTHOR NAME

- In Chinese, Korean especially, but also Smith in English and Singh in India can cause mis-identification of authors
- This is much improved by ORCID
- Many journals ask for ORCID numbers on submission



ORCID
Connecting Research and Researchers

FOR RESEARCHERS | FOR ORGANIZATIONS

WHAT IS ORCID? | THE ORCID TEAM

About ORCID

What is ORCID?

ORCID is an open, non-profit, community-based effort to provide a registry of unique researcher identifiers and a transparent method of linking research activities and outputs to these identifiers. ORCID is unique in its ability to reach across disciplines, research sectors, and national boundaries and its cooperation with other identifier systems. [Find out more >](#)

The ORCID Community

The ORCID community includes individual researchers, universities, national laboratories, commercial research organizations, research funders, publishers, national science agencies, data repositories, and international professional societies, all of whom have been critically affected by the lack of a central registry for researchers. ORCID coordinates with the community through Working Groups and its annual Outreach meetings. [Find out more >](#)

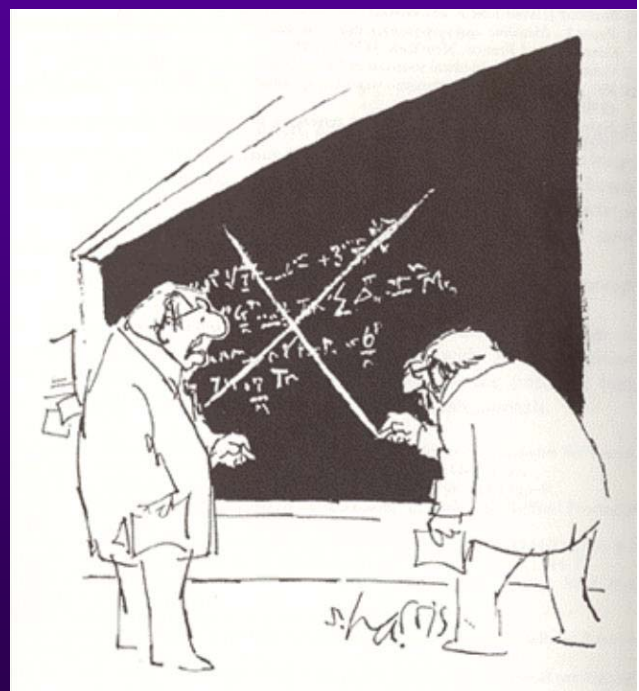


<http://orcid.org/>

11

JOURNAL POLICY – REFeree PROCESS

- Sometimes unclear
- Hints that it is not of a high standard
- Difficulties in attracting referees
- Use biased referees
 - Not coauthors
 - Not colleagues
- Checks on refereeing



That's it? That's peer review?

12

CONTENT QUALITY

QUALITY AND CONFORMITY WITH STATED AIMS AND SCOPE

- Are the articles recognisably associated with the journal title and scope?
- Are they reasonably distributed across the scope?

This can be a problem for some journals... suggests they have problems in attracting articles or worse...

CONTENT QUALITY

- Quality of layout counts
- Figures can be revealing
cut & paste from Excel!
- Are the articles and abstracts readable?
- Look at the hypotheses and conclusions especially
- Frequent problems
descriptive/repetitive
essay/review lacking intellectual synthesis

NOVELTY

DIFFERENT TYPES OF NOVELTY

- In research- often clearest innovation
- Repeats earlier work at new location, chemical, species...
 - Can easily become descriptive
- In interpretation – linked to other work
 - This is the hardest and is the most effort
- In conclusion

STRENGTHENING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Often seem to be omitted by many authors
- Is this simply a case study?
- Description without hypothesis
- This often leads to weak conclusions

Some articles seem to be data in search of a hypothesis....

REVIEWS

CAN BE INVITED

- Types of reviews.
 - Clinical reviews
 - Data synthesis e.g. global budgets
 - Literature reviews
- Can be used to refocus a journal
- Especially after changes to scope or title
- Attract large numbers of citations if:
 - timely
 - represents a novel intellectual synthesis
 - redirects the field

PROBLEMS WITH REVIEWS

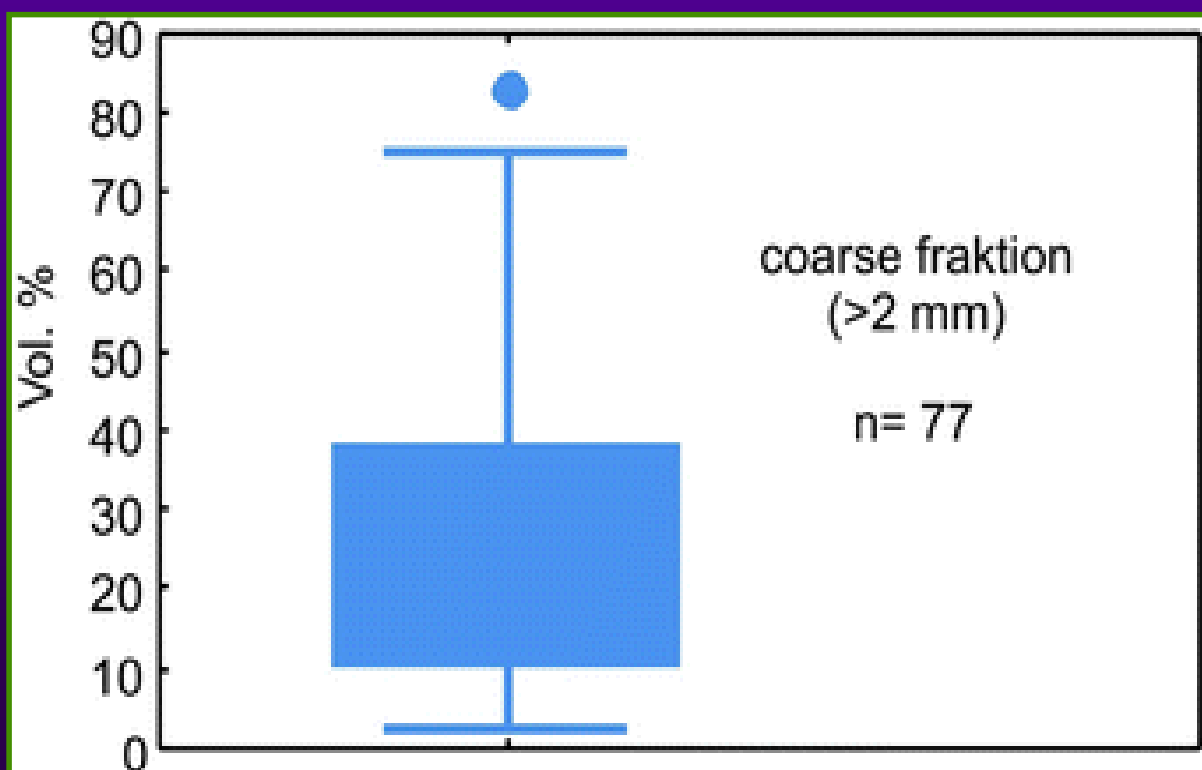
- Simple listing of literature
- Crude bibliometric analysis with little reason or sense of direction
- Often require
 - Novel intellectual synthesis
 - Projecting future directions

FIGURES

- Often seem cut and pasted from Excel!
- Not always tuned to understanding the data
- Poorly positioned and
- Mock 3-D very popular!

Suggests a lack of professionalism....

LOW INFORMATION CONTENT



CONTENT QUALITY NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- About 10% of the journals are not in English
- Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish frequent, but also Farsi, Chinese...
- Can I assess the article? Can I get help?
- Is the journal going to widen its readership?

“We only want Polish readers...”

WIDENING READERSHIP NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- Journal title in English – more a problem for Roman alphabets languages such as Malay, Polish etc.
- Offer key words and abstract in English
- Translate both figure and table captions
- Reference list in Roman alphabet (requirement)

JOURNAL STANDING CITATIONS

- What percentage of articles have been cited?
- How many times are articles cited?
- How recent are the citations?
- Who is citing the articles?
- What country does the citation come from?

*However inclusion in Scopus may shift this...
what it will look like in future?*

PROBLEMS WITH CITESCORE/IMPACT FACTOR

- Politics of impact factors
- Delays to publication
- Citation engineering
- (Mis)calculation of impact factors: $N_{\text{cit}}/N_{\text{art}}$
- Time span and citation half lives
- Individual impact: IF ~ 20% of variance

INCREASING CITATIONS

- Increasing quality
- Widening access to journal's audience
- Care with short/preliminary communications
- Publishing timely reviews
- Increasing publication speed
- Integrated cross-referenced special issues
- Requiring updated reference lists
- Saving good articles for beginning of year
- ORCID

Need for immediacy
cannot await a full paper

Generally
regarded as
ethical...

PRESS RELEASES

Profile of interesting, but potentially neglected papers

Carbon in Black Crusts from the Tower of London

DRA BONAZZA,* PETER COMBE,** CARLOTTA M. AND CRISTINA SABBIONI*
*CNR, Bologna 40129, Italy, and School of Earth Sciences, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK
**TTI, UK

investigates the origin, fluxes, and transformation of organic compounds within black crusts on the stone of the Tower of London. The crusts were analyzed for elemental carbon and organic carbon, including the water soluble fraction. Elemental carbon and low solubility compounds are expected to be conserved because of long residence times. Conversely, more soluble ions, like nitrate and formate would be removed from the layers of crusts by rainfall. At higher organic carbon concentrations, acetic acid may be produced within the crusts through biological transformations. Currently, traffic emissions contribute to increasingly organic rich crusts. The presence of elemental carbon to buildings darkens them and has important aesthetic implications. The

documented. Nevertheless, we have tried to examine samples of crust from the Tower of London to gain an understanding of the deposition, transformation, and accumulation of disfiguring black layers on urban stone surfaces.

Experimental Section

Tower of London. The Tower of London incorporates many buildings in addition to the central *White Tower* and is divided into three fortified wards: the *Inmost Ward*, comprising the central and Norman parts of the building (5). To the north, east, and west, this is surrounded by the *Inner Ward*, and beyond lies the *Outer Ward*, a fortified corridor created at the end of the 13th century. The wharf and moat revetment are outside these wards. More than twenty different stones were employed during the centuries of construction. One widely used material was a hard limestone (Kentish Ragstone), which is most frequently encountered in uncoursed walling (6), and is the substrate for most of the sampling undertaken during this project.

Environment. Since the late 13th century London has been a polluted city. The last 100 years have seen a transition from coal smoke to emissions from petrol and later diesel fuels (7). In the Victorian period, English cities were badly polluted, and building stones rapidly became blackened and damaged by sulfation (8). Although there have been many improvements in overall air quality in the last 50 years, emissions in central London remain high. Before the 1950s air pollution came from coal burning (3), and contained elemental carbon, nitrate, and sorbed organic compounds, and

STUDY: Schoolgirl's work is first in 12 years, funded by Nuffield Science



Stones of cathedral tell corrosive story

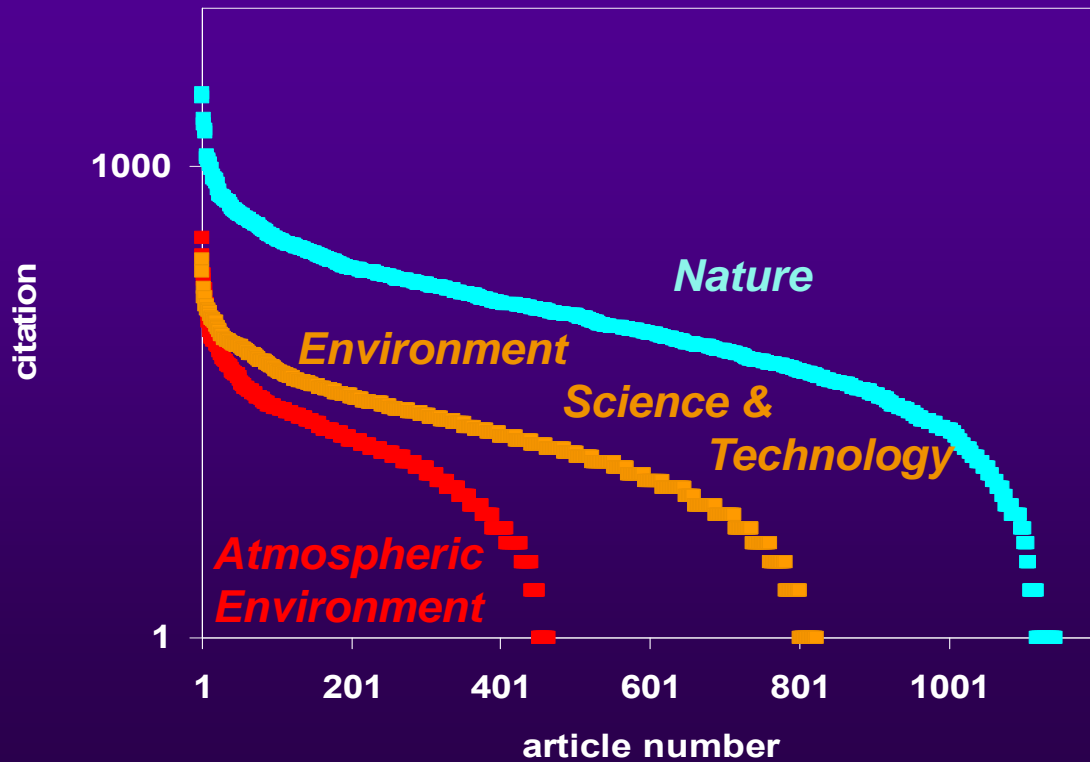


Europhotonics, press, television, radio... even National Geographic!

Urban air pollution is a major source of damage to archi-

EC and total OC to be 2.0 µg m⁻³ and 3.1-1.0 µg m⁻³, respectively (i.e., OC/EC from 2.0 to 2.9). The reported concentration of EC and OC at London and Birmingham road-

CUMMULATIVE CITATIONS



27

CITATION ENGINEERING

... typically by increasing internal citations

- Increasing the number of citable non-article items: letters, product reviews etc
- Writing heavily self-referenced editorials
- Pressuring authors to cite the journal
- Manipulating the reference lists

Usually regarded as unethical...?

28

JOURNAL STANDING

EDITORS

- Big boards – are they padded?
- Editors well known and widely published?
- Professional editors (i.e. not academics)

Some excellent

May not have expert knowledge

However they need a good/accessible board

Non academic editors need convincing web page to outline their editorial philosophy

REGULARITY

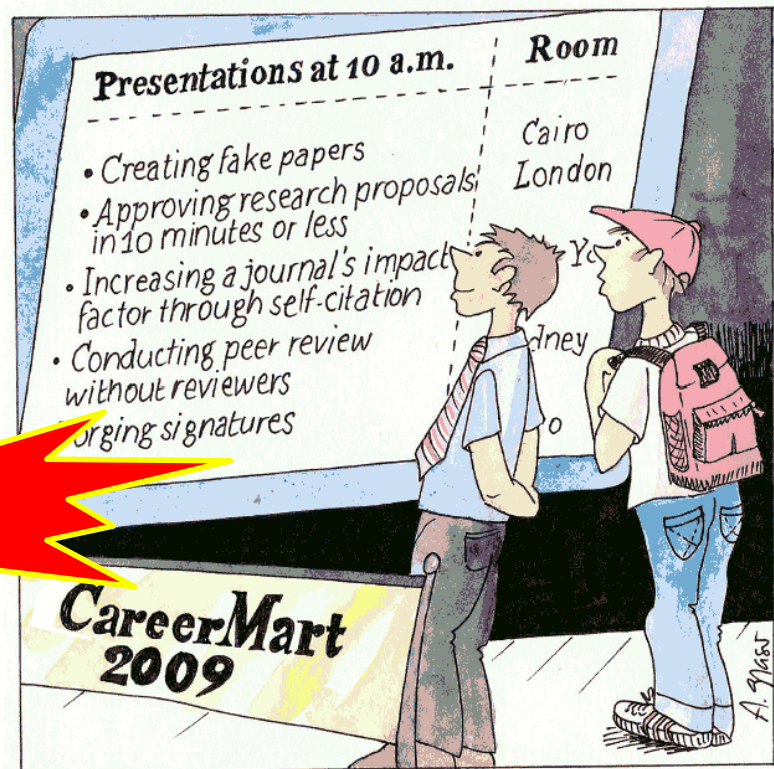
- Usually journals manage to meet this
- Some have low publication frequency or quantity, that makes their viability worth thinking about
- May be understandable in some fields

Rarely a problem...

ETHICAL ISSUES

Last laugh

by Annemarie Glaser



INCREASING IMPORTANCE

Ethical Editing
Autumn 2009

31

"I can't decide which talk to attend—they're all so relevant for a career in academic publishing!"

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSPARENCY

1. Peer review process
2. Governing body
3. Editorial team contacts
4. Author fees
5. Copyright
6. Dealing with misconduct
7. Ownership and management
8. Web site
9. Name of journal
10. Conflicts of interest
11. Access
12. Revenue sources
13. Advertising
14. Publishing schedule
15. Archiving
16. Direct marketing

NEW CRITERIA

32



THE END



Peter Brimblecombe
School of Energy and Environment
City University of Hong Kong