

Letter to the Editor

The Skewed Impact of Highly Cited Articles on Journal Impact Factor

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Comment on: <https://www.jmir.org/2022/12/e43089>

(*J Med Internet Res* 2023;25:e45322) doi: [10.2196/45322](https://doi.org/10.2196/45322)

KEYWORDS

COVID-19; journal impact factor; JIF; scientometrics; bibliometrics; infometrics; journal; assessment; research; resources; medical journal; literature; database; community; behavior

I read with interest the paper by Delardas and Giannos [1]. As the authors pointed out, journal impact factor inflation can affect the integrity of researchers as well as publishers. This phenomenon has also been reported as a “blockbuster effect” not only in the 6 high-impact medical journals reported by the authors (*Annals of Internal Medicine*, *The BMJ*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The Lancet*, *Nature Medicine*, and *The New England Journal of Medicine*) but also in infectious disease journals [2]. A similar trend was observed in

200 journals with a high number of COVID-19–related publications in the Web of Science as well [3].

Delardas and Giannos [1] evaluated the impact of COVID-19–related articles on a journal-by-journal basis, but it is unknown whether they found a single article or a small number of articles that had a significant effect on impact factor. It would be helpful for readers if the authors could provide more detailed explanations.

Acknowledgments

This work was conducted as part of the Nippon Foundation–Osaka University Project for Infectious Disease Prevention and was supported by the Inamori Foundation as well as by a Grant-in-Aid for Early-Career Scientists from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (23K12845).

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

Editorial Notice

The corresponding author of “How COVID-19 Affected the Journal Impact Factor of High Impact Medical Journals: Bibliometric Analysis” did not respond to this letter.

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1. Delardas O, Giannos P. How COVID-19 affected the journal impact factor of high impact medical journals: bibliometric analysis. *J Med Internet Res* 2022 Dec 21;24(12):e43089 [FREE Full text] [doi: [10.2196/43089](https://doi.org/10.2196/43089)] [Medline: [36454727](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36454727/)]
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Edited by T Leung; this is a non-peer-reviewed article. Submitted 24.12.22; accepted 01.09.23; published 18.09.23.

Please cite as:

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J Med Internet Res 2023;25:e45322

URL: <https://www.jmir.org/2023/1/e45322>

doi: [10.2196/45322](https://doi.org/10.2196/45322)

PMID: [37721788](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37721788/)

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