Opinion Paper

Eleftherios P. Diamandis*

More discussion on journal impact factor

Keywords: citation counts; Declaration of Research Assessment; impact; journal impact factor.

*Corresponding author: Eleftherios P. Diamandis, MD, PhD, FRCP(C), FRSC, Hold'em for Life Chair in Prostate Cancer Biomarkers, Division Head of Clinical Biochemistry, Mount Sinai Hospital and University Health Network, Professor & Head, Division of Clinical Biochemistry, Department of Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology, University of Toronto, Mount Sinai Hospital, Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Ctr., 60 Murray St [Box 32], Flr 6 – Rm L6–201 Toronto, ON, M5T 3L9, Canada, E-mail: ediamandis@mtsini.on.ca

In 2009, Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine published two ‘opinion’ papers, one by myself [1] and another one by Favaloro [2], debating the usefulness and longevity of the journal impact factor. At that time, I predicted that journal impact factor will fade away soon, while Dr. Favaloro expressed a different, opposing opinion.

Recently, during the 2012 American Society for Cell Biology meeting, the usefulness of the journal impact factor has been debated [3]. These deliberations led to the preparation of a document known as The San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA), which has been sponsored/signed by more than 150 leading scientists and 75 scientific organizations. DORA stipulates that the journal impact factor must not be used as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist’s contributions, or used in hiring, promotion and funding decisions. The declaration further recommends alternative metrics for evaluating researchers, including citation counts of individual articles. Essentially, these recommendations endorse the central message of my previous editorial [1], which states that the impact of an individual paper is not necessarily related to the impact factor of the journal that published it.

I believe that the readers of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine who have read the previous commentaries on journal impact factor [1, 2], should be interested to look at these latest recommendations (www.ascb.org/SFdeclaration.html).

Conflict of interest statement

Authors’ conflict of interest disclosure: The authors stated that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Research funding: None declared.

Employment or leadership: None declared.

Honorarium: None declared.

Received July 8, 2013; accepted July 10, 2013; previously published online August 2, 2013

References