

Citation analysis of *Acta Dermatovenologica Alpina, Pannonica et Adriatica*: 1992–2011

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Abstract

Acta Dermatovenologica Alpina, Pannonica et Adriatica is small regional professional journal that started publishing in 1992. Despite the journal's relatively narrow readership, it has significantly improved its quality and global profile during the last 20 years, as shown in this citation analysis update. Since 1992, 654 bibliographical items have been published. Among these, 545 (83.4%) were considered WoS citable items and 109 (16.6%) WoS noncitable items. Since 2008, 90% of all published items have been considered WoS citable items and received an average of 1.9 citations per item. The predicted *Acta Dermatovenol APA* impact factor calculated using data from a Cited Reference search of Thomson Scientific's Web of Science has shown steep and continuous increase since 2006, when the journal acquired full indexing status in Index Medicus/Medline, and has been above 0.5 since 2008.

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Introduction

Acta Dermatovenologica Alpina, Pannonica et Adriatica (*Acta Dermatovenol APA*) was founded by Aleksej Kansky in 1992 in Ljubljana. In its two decades of publishing, the journal experienced various ups and downs, as described in detail previously (1–5). Several important steps were made in past years towards improving the quality and international profile of the journal. Since 2000 (with volume 9), the entire content of *Acta Dermatovenol APA* has been freely available at the journal's official website, <http://www.acta-apa.org/>. An important breakthrough occurred in 2005, when in addition to Biomedicina Slovenica and EMBASE/Excerpta Medica, the journal achieved full indexing status in Index Medicus/Medline. The entire content is listed in PubMed starting from volume 14 onwards. In 2012, the journal was completely redesigned with the goal of attaining the next important achievement: indexing in Thomson Scientific Science Citation Index (SCI) and acquiring an official impact factor (IF) in the near future (4, 5). This citation analysis, covering the period from 1992 to 2011, is an update to our previous analysis (4) and shows substantial improvement of the quality of the journal in recent years.

Methods

The entire content of *Acta Dermatovenol APA* from 1992 to 2011 was included in the analysis. Original *Acta Dermatovenol APA* publication types were reclassified into official Thomson Scientific Web of Science (WoS) publication types and were divided into WoS citable and noncitable items as described in detail previously (4, 6). Citation analysis was performed manually through a Cited Reference search of the WoS electronic database (http://home.izum.si/izum/ft_baze/wos.asp) individually for each bibliographical item on 27 November 2012.

The predicted IF was calculated from the number of citations retrieved and the number of citable items published. This analysis used the definition of the journal IF as used in Journal Citation Reports (JCR). Journal IF in the year X is defined as the ratio of the number of citations received in year X by all published items in

the journal in the years X – 1 and X – 2 (value A, Table 1) and the sum of the number of published items in journal in the years X – 1 and X – 2 (value B, Table 1). As mentioned earlier, results were merged with those published previously (4) to enable a complete overview.

Results

As shown in Table 1, 654 bibliographical items were published in *Acta Dermatovenol APA* from 1992 to 2011. Among these, 545 (83.4%) were considered WoS citable items, including 402 articles and 143 reviews, and 109 (16.6%) WoS noncitable items (51 meeting summaries, 28 letters, 12 items about an individual, 11 book reviews, and seven editorials). The total number of SCI citations received retrieved from WoS was 544. Among the 544 citations, 483 (88.8%) were considered independent citations and 61 (11.2%) author self-citations. Of 544 citations, 545 WoS citable items received 531 citations (an average of 0.97 citations per item) and 109 WoS noncitable items received 13 citations (an average of 0.12 citations per item). Among the 545 citable items published in *Acta Dermatovenol APA* from 1992 to 2011, 324 (59.4%) items were without a citation, 101 (18.5%) had received one SCI citation, 55 (10.1%) items had received two SCI citations, 29 (5.3%) items had received three SCI citations, and 36 (6.6%) items had received four or more SCI citations as of 27 September 2012. The most cited item, classified as a review, received 21 SCI citations. Among 109 WoS noncitable items, 7 (6.4%) items published in *Acta Dermatovenol APA* from 1992 to 2011 received at least one SCI citation and 102 (93.6%) items were without a citation until 27 September 2012. Our citation analysis showed a positive trend of *Acta Dermatovenol APA*'s predicted IF, which has been continuously growing since 2006 (Fig. 1).

Discussion

In comparison to data published in 2009 (4), the average WoS citable item published in *Acta Dermatovenol APA* received 1.5 more citations per item, which is supported by the higher numbers of submissions and downloads from the journal's website and, most

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importantly, a progressive increase in the number of citations received. The proportion of self-citations among all citations identified (11.2%) is comparable to those obtained in 2009 and other leading biomedical journals (4, 7). In addition to author self-citation (8), journal self-citation is identified as one of the top ten journal IF manipulations that artificially improve a journal's IF (9–11). In this analysis of *Acta Dermatovenerol APA*, only a few journal self-citations were identified.

The IF is a measure designed for comparing science and social science journals according to citations. Despite the fact that it was primarily developed as a bibliographical tool (12, 13), it is most often used as a quality index for research and studies (14). Although the IF is of high importance for both authors and editors, it is often criticized as unrepresentative, misleading, and easily manipulated (6, 15–17). Because *Acta Dermatovenerol APA* is not indexed in WoS, an official IF is not available for the journal. However, several studies show that an IF can be calculated “in house” with a fairly good estimation of the IF that would be

published in the annual Thomson Scientific JCR. Using data from Thomson Scientific's WoS, we calculated a predictive IF for *Acta Dermatovenerol APA* for the years 1992 to 2011. Because we used a very conservative and stringent approach for classification of citable items, we believe the calculated IF is an underestimation of the (future) official IF in JCR. As mentioned previously (4), the most important increase in the journal's IF occurred after 2005, presumably due to full indexing in Index Medicus/Medline, and it has continually increased since then, which is quite encouraging. Surprisingly, free availability to the entire content of the journal (since 2000) did not have any measurable impact on the IF (Fig. 1). With its predicted IF, *Acta Dermatovenerol APA* would be ranked 45th out of 55 and 50th out of 59 journals listed under the category “Dermatology” for 2010 and 2011, respectively, in Thomson Scientific JCR Science Edition. We hope these facts will also be recognized and rewarded by Thomson Scientific with the journal's official impact factor.

Table 1 | Results of the citation analysis of bibliographical items published in *Acta Dermatovenerologica Alpina, Pannonica et Adriatica* from 1992 to 2011.

Publication year	Total number of published items	Total number of WoS citable items	Total number of citations received	Total number of independent citations received	A value for IF calculation	B value for IF calculation	Predicted IF (A/B)
1992	28	20	19	16	/	/	/
1993	30	24	4	3	/	/	/
1994	36	32	34	27	2	44	0.045
1995	41	36	10	9	3	56	0.054
1996	39	30	18	14	2	68	0.029
1997	26	22	2	2	2	66	0.030
1998	29	25	10	10	2	52	0.038
1999	32	25	15	12	0	47	0.000
2000	30	22	10	9	5	50	0.100
2001	32	26	20	5	2	47	0.043
2002	25	23	12	8	2	48	0.042
2003	29	24	8	8	6	49	0.122
2004	29	22	15	10	2	47	0.043
2005	30	26	61	56	2	46	0.043
2006	36	27	30	26	16	48	0.333
2007	38	31	31	29	28	53	0.528
2008	34	31	126	124	29	58	0.500
2009	40	34	78	75	36	62	0.581
2010	37	34	32	31	47	65	0.723
2011	33	31	9	9	46	68	0.676
Total	654	545	544	483	/	/	/

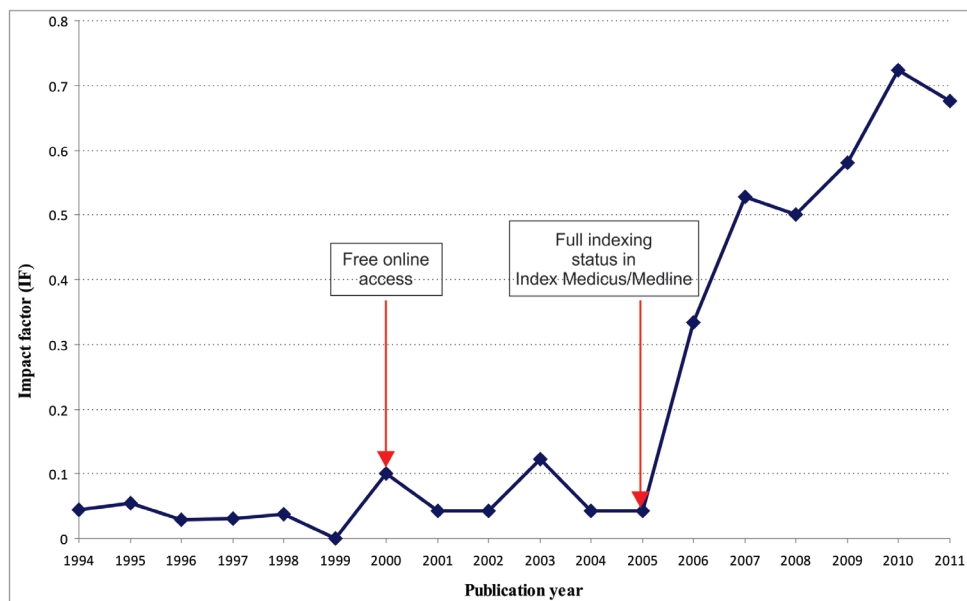


Figure 1 | Predicted impact factor of *Acta Dermatovenerologica Alpina, Pannonica et Adriatica* from 1992 to 2011.

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