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Abstract

In current academic systems professors are forced to publish as much as possible because they are evaluated and ranked according to the number of their publications and citations in scientific journals. This 'publish or perish'-principle results in the publication of more and more nonsense. This tendency can only be stopped by abolishing the currently pervasive competition for publication. In the past, researchers who had nothing to say were not incentivized to publish but nowadays they also have to publish continually. Non-performance has been replaced by the performance of nonsense. This is worse because it results in an increasing difficulty to find truly interesting research among the mass of irrelevant publications. A number of perverse incentives are associated with the competition for publication. This includes strategic citing and praising, endless variation of already existing models and theories, and emphasizing formal and mathematical skills, while deemphasizing the content of a paper. Furthermore, in order to maximize the number of publications, scientists also try to squeeze out as many publications as possible from minor ideas (salami tactics), increase the number

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of co-authors, try to become ever more specialized in already highly specialized scientific disciplines and, in the most extreme case, just fake experiments and results. Engaging in all these activities is basically a waste of time as it does not foster the advancement of science. Instead, it crowds out the intrinsic motivation of professors and other scientists, which is essential for creativity. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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