

Citation characteristics of non-citable documents and the contributions to journal impact factor

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Journals Impact Factor (JIF), is an important indicator to defined by the Institute of Science Information as the number of citations within a given year to items published by a journal in the preceding two years, divided by the number of citable items published by the journal during those two years. But, the “citable documents” include only articles and reviews, and the “non-citable documents” (NCDs) actually can be and are often cited, and some may have higher citations. Our purpose is to explore the cited characteristics of NCDs and its contributions to the journal impact factors. All data were from the Web of Science database. The results showed that the 315017 NCDs (included editorial, letter, reprint, news item, correction, biographical item, and book review) were retrieved from 2012 to 2013. There were 160580 editorials and 81652 letters, which the citations of them in 2014 were 98434 and 40692, respectively, and citations per item were 0.613 and 0.498. The contributions of these two types of NCDs to journal impact factors were obvious. Of the 64 journals with NCDs \geq 500 or \geq 10 that the citations \geq 20, there were 19 journals that the contributions of NCDs to the impact factors were more than 20%. Although some journals, such as Natural, Science, and The New England Journal of Medicine published a more NCDs, its contributions to JIF are not obvious, only a few journals, the NCD’s contributions is higher to JIF, such as New Scientist (78.6%), Clinical Nuclear Medicine (41.7%), Medical Journal of Australia (35.5%), British Medical Journal (32.9%), British Journal of General Practice (30.1%). That the greater contribution of NCDs on JIF are mainly medical journals.