



Ethics and scientific integrity day

Publication ethics workshop (case study)

ULiège 2026 - Christophe Dony

Reviewer citation manipulation

- **Advice from COPE Members** ⓘ

This is a general scenario which has been observed in increasing numbers at our journal. We are finding that some reviewers provide a referee's report which include a request to cite a number of papers, which on closer inspection are all authored by the referee.

Peer review

Should the referee's report be discarded?

Should the referee be notified that the editor is aware of this citation manipulation?

Should it be reported to the publisher?

Make groups of 4-6 people and in 10-15 min. :

- Read the case
- Answer the questions above using this form >
 - **One answer per group** (discuss)
 - Answer in a journal editor capacity
 - Motivate your answers

ULiège Ethics Day - Case Study Citation 10_09_26



A real 'general scenario' case study



Case ⓘ

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Reviewer citation manipulation

- **Advice from COPE Members** ⓘ

This is a general scenario which has been observed in increasing numbers at our journal. We are finding that some reviewers provide a referee's report which include a request to cite a number of papers, which on closer inspection are all authored by the referee.

Peer review

Case number: 23-15

Case year: 2023

Case status: Closed

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<https://publicationethics.org/guidance/case/reviewer-citation-manipulation>

A diversity of topics related to publication ethics (COPE)

Guidance

Search

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Showing 1-10 of 1005 results found

Sort by Relevance

^ Topics

Selecting an option will reload the page.

☐ Post-publication review (280)

☐ Journal management (271)

☐ Research ethics (248)

☐ Authorship and contributorship (240)

☐ Data (179)

☐ Plagiarism (161)

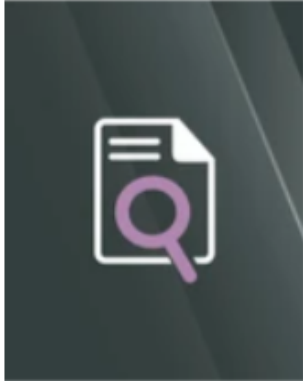
☐ Peer review (134)

☐ Conflicts of interest (94)

☐ Publication practices (61)

☐ Diversity (DEIA) (23)

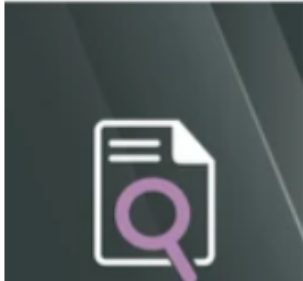
Case



Duplicate publication

An email was received from a reader indicating a possible duplicate publication of an article that appeared in the journal in 2004, and a similar publication that appeared in another journal in 2003...

Case



Patient consent

The journal received a case report for a patient presenting with a particular syndrome in which patients give approximate answers to simple questions. This syndrome has been considered as a...

<https://publicationethics.org/guidance>

General advice based on our case study

Case ⓘ

Reviewer citation manipulation

- Advice from COPE Members ⓘ



Advice

Advice from COPE Members: Advice on this case is from COPE Members and COPE Council Members. Advice on individual cases is not formal COPE guidance.

Reviewers not uncommonly recommend citations to their own work, and the editor's response should depend on the wider context of the reviewer report and whether this is a repeated behaviour.

In a small field or where an author has genuinely overlooked relevant contributions by the reviewer, it may be appropriate to suggest these references. It is also possible that the author has deliberately omitted references to a particular authority for personal or other reasons, or is engaged in some form of citation manipulation themselves. If the reviewer has only made one or two suggestions this is also less likely to raise a concern, even if they are all to their own work. In this case the editor can make a judgement on whether to pass the recommendations on to the author or how they frame the request to include the citations.

In other cases, the reviewer may be motivated by personal gain and if it looks like a repeated pattern may merit removing them from the reviewer database and notifying their institution. Another flag can be if the reviewer gives DOIs rather than full references in their suggestions as this can be a way to disguise the fact that they are referring to their own work. Ultimately, this behaviour could compromise the anonymity of the review process (if this is the journal's practice) and should also be considered in this light.

The journal should take the issue up with the reviewer, but it is advisable to frame this as education; reviewers should be thinking beyond the scope of their own work in making recommendations to authors. The journal should also review their instructions for reviewers to ensure that they cover appropriate behaviour regarding suggestions for citations. Finally, they could consider a policy where reviewers agree to be named if they are making suggestions to cite their own work.

Ultimately it is up to the editor how they present reviewer requests to authors. They can, for example, recommend that they only include those which are relevant, or edit some of the requests out of the report altogether.

More guidance is available in the COPE discussion document on [Citation manipulation](#).

Citation manipulation key elements



DISCUSSION COPE DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

VERSION 1: July 2019

CITATION MANIPULATION

Citation manipulation refers to the following types of behaviour:

- Excessive citation of an author's research by the author (ie, self-citation by authors) as a means solely of increasing the number of citations of the author's work;
- Excessive citation of articles from the journal in which the author is publishing a research article as a means solely of increasing the number of citations of the journal; or
- Excessive citation of the work of another author or journal, sometimes referred to as 'honorary' citations (eg, the editor-in-chief of the journal to which one is submitting a manuscript or a well-known scholar in the field of the researcher) or 'citation stacking' solely to contribute to the citations of the author(s)/ journal(s) in question.

<https://publicationethics.org/guidance/discussion-document/citation-manipulation>

Excessive self-citing

materialstoday:
PROCEEDINGS



Volume 33, Part 7, 2020, Pages 4047-4053

Emission analysis of the diesel engine using *Stoechospermum marginatum*, brown marine algae with Al_2O_3 nano fluid

S. Karthikeyan ^a, A. Prathima ^b, M. Periyasamy ^c, G. Mahendran ^c

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- 56 references - 55 self-citations!

Karthikeyan, S., A. Prathima, M. Periyasamy, and G. Mahendran. 2020. "Emission Analysis of the Diesel Engine Using *Stoechospermum Marginatum*, Brown Marine Algae with Al_2O_3 Nano Fluid." *Materials Today: Proceedings*, International Conference on Nanotechnology: Ideas, Innovation and Industries, vol. 33 (January): 4047–53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.matpr.2020.06.480>.

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Reviewer mills and (not so) covert citation manipulation attempts

 Reviewer 3 · Mar 26, 2021

Basic reporting

In this paper, the authors presented an integrated three-tier trust management framework that evaluates cloud service providers in three main domains. Below are some comments to improve the paper.

- Please highlight the contribution clearly in the introduction
- this paper lacks in Novelty of the proposed approach. The author should highlight the contribution clearly in the introduction and provide a comparison note with existing studies.
- Some Paragraphs in the paper can be merged and some long paragraphs can be split into two.
- The quality of the figures can be improved more. Figures should be eye-catching. It will enhance the interest of the reader.
- Figure 11, only the graph area should be added to the paper. remove grey borders. and the same for others.
- The background of figure "Figure 12 Service Providers Overall Trust results" should be white with font color black.

- Authors should add the most recent reference:

- 1) <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/spe.2846>
- 2) <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9068217>
- 3) <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11063-020-10414-5>

- please give a proofread check to the paper.

Experimental design

- What are the computational resources reported in the state of the art for the same purpose?

Validity of the findings

- What are the evaluations used for the verification of results?
- Clearly highlight the terms used in the algorithm and explain them in the text.

Anonymous Reviewer (2021) [Peer Review #3 of "An integrated three-tier trust management framework in mobile edge computing using fuzzy logic \(v0.1\)". PeerJ Computer Science](#) <https://doi.org/10.7287/peerj-cs.700v0.1/reviews/3>

 Reviewer 3 · Mar 27, 2021

Basic reporting

- Please highlight the contribution clearly in the introduction
- The author should highlight the contribution clearly in the introduction and provide a comparison note with existing studies.
- Some Paragraphs in the paper can be merged and some long paragraphs can be split into two.
- The quality of the figures can be improved more. Figures should be eye-catching. It will enhance the interest of the reader. e.g., "Figure 1. Security development stages", "Figure 3. Overview of the proposed architecture"
- Authors should add the most recent reference:

1) <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9316223>

2) <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9359538>

3) A. Naeem, A. R. Javed, M. Rizwan, S. Abbas, J. C. -W. Lin and T. R. Gadekallu, "DARE-SEP: A Hybrid Approach of Distance Aware Residual Energy-Efficient SEP for WSN," in IEEE Transactions on Green Communications and Networking, doi: 10.1109/TGCN.2021.3067885.

- please give a proofread check to the paper.

Experimental design

No comments

Validity of the findings

- What are the computational resources reported in the state of the art for the same purpose?
- What are the evaluations used for the verification of results?
- Clearly highlight the terms used in the algorithm and explain them in the text.

Additional comments

- Please cite each equation and clearly explain its terms.

Anonymous Reviewer (2021) [Peer Review #3 of "Secure biometric authentication with de-duplication on distributed cloud storage \(v0.1\)". PeerJ Computer Science](#) <https://doi.org/10.7287/peerj-cs.569v0.1/reviews/3>

Of irrelevant citations and citation 'slop'

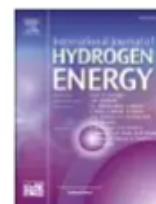
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Origin of the distinct site occupations of H atom in hcp Ti and Zr/Hf

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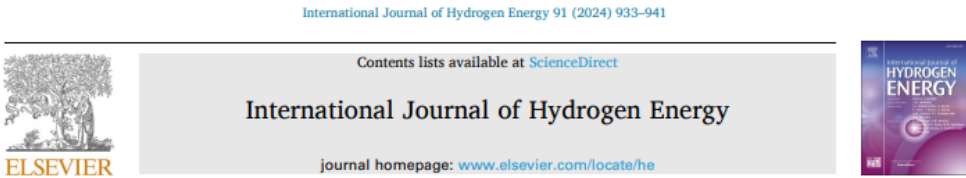
Yang, Fan-Xi, Yi-Fei Zhu, Shuo Cao, et al. « RETRACTION: Origin of the distinct site occupations of H atom in hcp Ti and Zr/Hf ». *International Journal of Hydrogen Energy* 91 (novembre 2024): 933-41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhydene.2024.10.197>.



In this paper, first-principles calculations are performed to explore the physics underlying the distinct site-occupations of H in Ti and Zr/Hf. The solution energies of H in the T and O interstices of Ti, Zr, and Hf are calculated and compared to determine the stable occupation site of H. The lattice structures and electronic structures of the systems are analyzed, with which the distinct site occupations are discussed. The paper is arranged as follows. In Section 2, we describe the method and computational details. In Section 3, we present the solution energy, crystal structure, and electronic structure from the calculations. In Section 4, we discuss the physical origin of the distinct site occupations of H in Ti and Zr/Hf. Finally, we conclude our work in Section 5.

As strongly requested by the reviewers, here we cite some references [35–47] although they are completely irrelevant to the present work.

Of irrelevant citations and citation 'slop'



Origin of the distinct site occupations of H atom in hcp Ti and Zr/Hf

Fan-Xi Yang^{a,b}, Yi-Fei Zhu^c, Shuo Cao^{a,*}, Chao-Ming Wang^d, Ying-Jie Ma^a, Rui Yang^a, Qing-Miao Hu^{a,*}

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ARTICLE INFO

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hcp metals
Hydrogen embrittlement
Hydrogen storage
DFT calculations
Site occupation of H

ABSTRACT

The location of the H atoms in Ti, Zr, and Hf is crucial to the formation of the hydrides in these metals as it influences the crystal lattice transformation and the hydrogen diffusion involved in the hydride formation process. Although Ti, Zr, and Hf are of the hexagonal close-packed structure with similar lattice parameters, the solute H atom occupies the octahedral interstice in Ti but the tetragonal interstice in Zr and Hf, of which the origin is still mysterious. In the present work, the origin of the distinct site occupation behavior of H atom in Ti and Zr/Hf is investigated through first-principles calculations. The calculated solution energies confirm that H prefers the octahedral interstice in Ti and the tetragonal interstice in Zr and Hf. We ascribe the distinct site occupations of H in Ti and Zr/Hf to the screened Coulomb repulsion between the H (as a screened proton in the metals) and the metal atoms against the interstitial size. The competition between the H-induced electron accumulation effect and the metal–H bond breaking effect might matter as well. We propose that, as a general rule, a H atom prefers to occupy the site with a trade-off between a large space and a high electron density in metals.

1. Introduction

Hydrogen (H) embrittles titanium (Ti), zirconium (Zr) metals and their alloys [1–3] through the formation of brittle hydrides, enhancing the atomic decohesion, accelerating the corrosion, multiplication, and motion of dislocations [4–7]. The behavior of hydrogen in Ti and Zr based alloys is of fundamental interest and vital importance because these alloys are the key engineering materials for aerospace, marine, and energy resource applications [8,9].

The H atoms in solid metals reside in the interstitial sites of the crystal lattice of the metals. In the H atom, it was determined to occupy the tetrahedral (T) site at room temperature by Narang et al. [10] and Fukai [11] using the inelastic neutron scattering experiments, which was after confirmed by many first principles calculations based on density functional theory [12–15]. The experimental investigation of H occupation in Hf is scarce. DFT calculations predicted that the T-site is preferable for H to occupy in Hf [16–18], similar to the case of Zr. The site occupation of H in Ti is, however, controversial. Based on

Ross concluded that H locates in the T-site of Ti at temperature of 315 °C [19]. The neutron diffraction experiment by Pinto et al. [20] and the nuclear magnetic resonance measurements by Korn et al. [21] suggested that H dissolved in Ti randomly in the T-sites at room temperature as well. However, the neutron scattering experiments by Hempelmann and Stritzker [22] indicated that a large part of H atoms occupies the octahedral (O) interstices in Ti around 300 °C, in agreement with the finding of Alperin et al. [23]. Besides, advanced DFT calculations predicted consistently that H atom energetically prefers the O-site in Ti [24,25].

The possible different site occupation behavior of solute H atom in Ti and Zr/Hf as a fundamental issue is highly interesting and somehow unexpected because all three metals are of hexagonal close packed (hcp) structure and their lattice parameters c/a are very close to each other, and, therefore, their relative interstitial sizes are almost identical. More practically, the different locations of solute H are crucial to the understanding of the formation of the hydrides. Ti/Zr/Hf hydrides form through two accompanying processes, i.e., the transition of the crystal lattice from hcp to fcc (face-centered cubic) or fct (face-centered

RETRACTION: Origin of the distinct site occupations of H atom in hcp Ti and Zr/Hf

Fan-Xi Yang^{a,b}, Yi-Fei Zhu^c, Shuo Cao^a, Chao-Ming Wang^d, Ying-Jie Ma^a, Rui Yang^a, Qing-Miao Hu^a

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This article has been retracted at the request of the Editor-in-Chief.

The Editor-in-Chief was alerted to the presence of a sentence in this paper referring to the prompting of 13 citations by reviewers during the peer review process. An

Of citation cartels and citations for sale

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Vendor offering citations for purchase is latest bad actor in scholarly publishing

Unscrupulous researchers have many options to boost their citation counts, but a new vendor has emerged offering to sell citations directly to researchers. The vendor, which calls itself the "Citation Service," is a for-profit company that claims to have a "proven" method for increasing citation counts. The company's website, which is currently under construction, promises to "increase your citation count by up to 100% in just 45 days." The company's services include "Google Scholar profile creation," "citation improvement," "i10 index improvement," and "H index improvement." The company's website also features a table of services and prices, which are listed below.

SERVICES	CLASS I	CLASS II	CLASS III
Google Scholar profile creation	✓	✓	✓
Citation improvement	10+	10+	10+
i10 index improvement	✓	✓	✓
H index improvement	✓	✓	✓
Cited in	SCI/SCI-E Journals	Scopus journals	International journals / conferences

12 FEB 2024 • 6:05 PM ET • BY KATIE LANGIN

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Citation Service

Our Citation Plans

Did you ever consider the impact of your research on the scientific community as a researcher? Did your research articles reach out to field practitioners? Regardless of whether the publications are yours, we are responsible for the global impact of your research. We calculate global citation factors such as h-index, i10 index, and so on for your individual publications and keep you informed of their impact. Our research promotion services aim to increase citations by utilising our renowned SEO technology, various archives, indexing libraries, and so on. We forward your research to the appropriate academician, who will work on it further on this article as part of their research career. This exceeds the traditional citation count of your every article, and you will become a world-renowned researcher.

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Cited in	SCI/SCI-E Journals	Scopus journals	International journals / conferences

Yes dr 11:14 AM

We have packages 11:14 AM

Publications Department 1:
Thank you 🍷🥰
Welcome to [Redacted]
Citations and H-Index Booster package cost

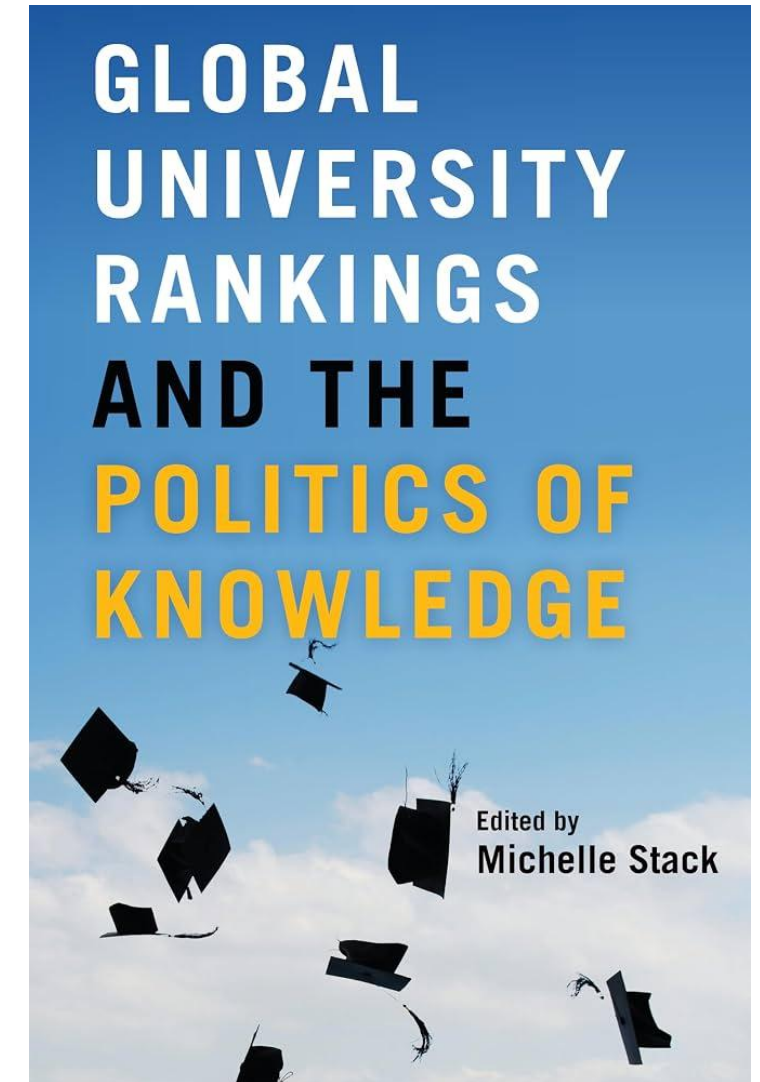
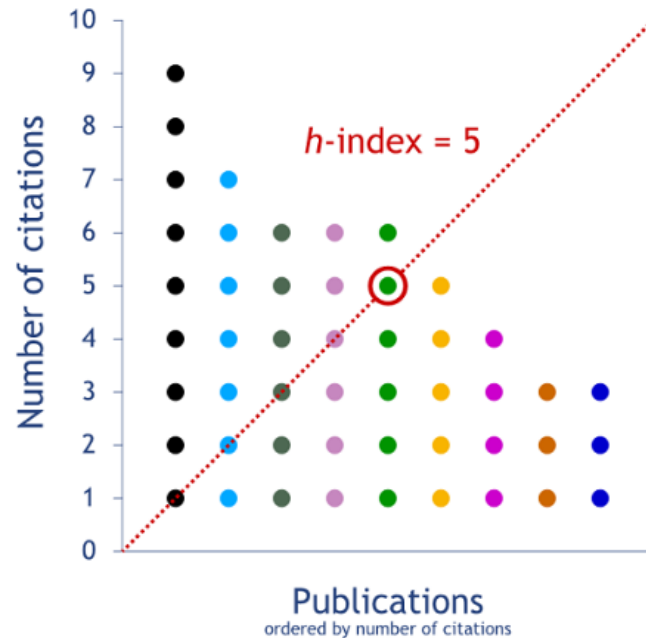
You will be providing us 10 - 15 references in apa style format
We add that in Scopus publication papers as references,

100 citation package 500 USD

50 citations 300 USD

Duration : 45 Days

What is driving citation manipulation ?



How is ULiège involved in reforming research assessment?

Déclaration sur l'évaluation de la recherche (DORA)

L'Université de Liège signe la déclaration de San Francisco sur l'évaluation de la recherche (DORA) - Avril 2022



L'ULiège signe l'accord CoARA pour la réforme de l'évaluation de la recherche

21 juin 2023 Dans INSTITUTION ET ENGAGEMENTS RECHERCHE

