A Fake Scientific Paper to Validate the Automated Check of Whether References are Real

Lisa DeBruine[1] and Daniel Lakens[2]

1 Department of Psychology, Glasgow University, UK

2 Human-Technology Interaction Group, Eindhoven University of Technology

Author Note:

This is a fake article largely generated by AI. It has only been created to validate the validate_references function in Papercheck: https://scienceverse.github.io/papercheck/

Abstract

Ensuring the existence and accuracy of references in scientific writing is critical for maintaining the integrity of academic work. This paper highlights the risks of unverified citations and demonstrates the need for automated tools to detect invalid references.

Introduction

References form the backbone of scholarly communication. They not only give credit but also allow verification of information. However, in many cases, references may point to non-existent or incorrect sources (Young 2019; Goldenberg 2014).

Related Work

Studies have analyzed citation errors across various disciplines (Galligan and Dyas-Correia 2016). These emphasize that even top-tier journals suffer from referencing issues and that DOI integration is key to solving them (Vizváry 2025).

Why Validation Matters

Unverified citations result in misinformation and waste readers' time. Validating DOIs helps confirm the presence and accuracy of a cited work (Langston & Tyler, 2004). Automated tools can ensure that every DOI resolves to a real document.

Case Study

Ten references were selected for this study, five of which are known to be real and verifiable, and five deliberately fabricated. Real citations such as those by Galligan and Dyas-Correia (2016) resolve correctly, while fabricated citations (e.g., Alvarez et al. 2023; Okoro et al. 2021) do not resolve or correspond to existing literature.

Conclusion

Validating references using DOIs ensures scholarly accuracy and credibility. Authors, editors, and reviewers should make DOI resolution a standard part of the publication pipeline.

References

Galligan, F., & Dyas-Correia, S. (2016). Availability of digital object identifiers (DOIs) in Web of Science and Scopus. Journal of Informetrics, 10(1), 98–109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2015.11.008

Young, A. (2019). Harness the power of the DOI: Digital object identifiers and what they can do for you. Campbell Systematic Reviews, 15(4), e1063. https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1063

Vizváry, M. (2025). Unravelling Citation Rules: A Comparative Analysis of Referencing Instruction Patterns in Scopus-Indexed Journals. Learned Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1661

Goldenberg, D. C. (2014). The importance of the DOI Digital Object Identifier. Revista Brasileira de Cirurgia Plástica, 29(3), 311. https://doi.org/10.5935/2177-1235.2014RBCP0058

Langston, M., & Tyler, J. (2004). Linking to journal articles in an online teaching environment: The persistent link, DOI, and OpenURL. The Internet and Higher Education, 7(1), 51-58. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2003.11.004

Alvarez, P., Zhang, Y., & Koenig, F. (2023). Quantum referencing: A paradox. Journal of Impossible Physics, 12(1), 101–110. https://doi.org/10.9999/jip.2023.0001

Petrov, V., & Lang, T. (2020). Citation mirages in theoretical linguistics. Phantom Studies, 7(3), 44–52. https://doi.org/10.9999/ps.2020.0033

Okoro, D., Mendez, S., & Gupta, A. (2021). Invisible references in modern research. Journal of Nonexistent Knowledge, 3(2), 15–21. https://doi.org/10.9999/jnk.2021.0007

Vega, N., & Hartmann, J. (2019). Fabricated citations and their consequences. Research Myths Quarterly, 8(4), 77–83. https://doi.org/10.9999/rmq.2019.0042

Sato, K. (2022). The lost art of referencing. Academic Legends, 1(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.9999/al.2022.0001