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Did you know?

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Section 6: Did You Know?

...That there are nearly 3,000 papers focusing on the interpretation of data or results?

Sarah Huggett

Research can be the primary focus of a scientist's career, but finishing an experiment does not mean that the task is over: once the data have been compiled, they must be analyzed and interpreted for a research project to be complete. This is a crucial part of a researcher's workflow, as confirmed by the relative abundance of literature on this rather precise topic. Indeed, a quick Scopus search for (interpret* and (data or result*)) in the title of scholarly papers published in journals between 1996 and 2010 retrieves 2,855 results, revealing that there have been no less than 160 papers focusing on this fairly specific subject published every year. This corpus shows growth of 2.7% per annum between 1996 and 2010, which is comparable to the growth of scientific literature as a whole. It may be deduced from these results that scientific data and their interpretations are closely intertwined, which can explain why they are growing hand in hand.