

## SELF – CITATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC CAREER

Hana Gendelman

Supervisors: Dr. Avishag Gordon, Technion; Dr. Dafna Rabban, University of Haifa

Self – citations are defined as citations to the author's previous work. This thesis is devoted to a study of the effect self- citations have on the development of a scientific career. The objective of this research is to establish whether the "self – citation" behavior researchers changes while his/her scientific career develops. A target group that consists of faculty members with tenure, working in Israeli universities in three different research fields – Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Physics, about 50 faculty members in each field, were selected. The main measured data were the general numbers of publications, citations and self – citations for every researcher in every period of his/her career.

To this point, two main findings can be reported. First, the relative amount of the self – citations definitely decreases with the career development. For instance, for Electrical Engineering researchers the average rate of self- citations dropped from about 20% at the stage preceding the first faculty appointment to about 8-10% at a more advanced career stages. These results give rise to a conjecture that an important incentive for self – citations is self - promotion, at least, at early career stages. The other result is that the majority of researchers obey a distinct individual pattern of the "self – citational" behavior. Some of them tend to cite themselves significantly more than the others and do so persistently over all stages of their careers. These results imply that the self-citations should be carefully observed if citation data are to be used for job and academic promotion decisions.