

Predictable Popularity? Citation Trends of Science Dissertations

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WHAT

More than **53,000** citations from **609** civil engineering, computer science, mathematics and physics dissertations were examined to determine the popularity of resources cited by Ohio State University's PhD students from 1998-2012.

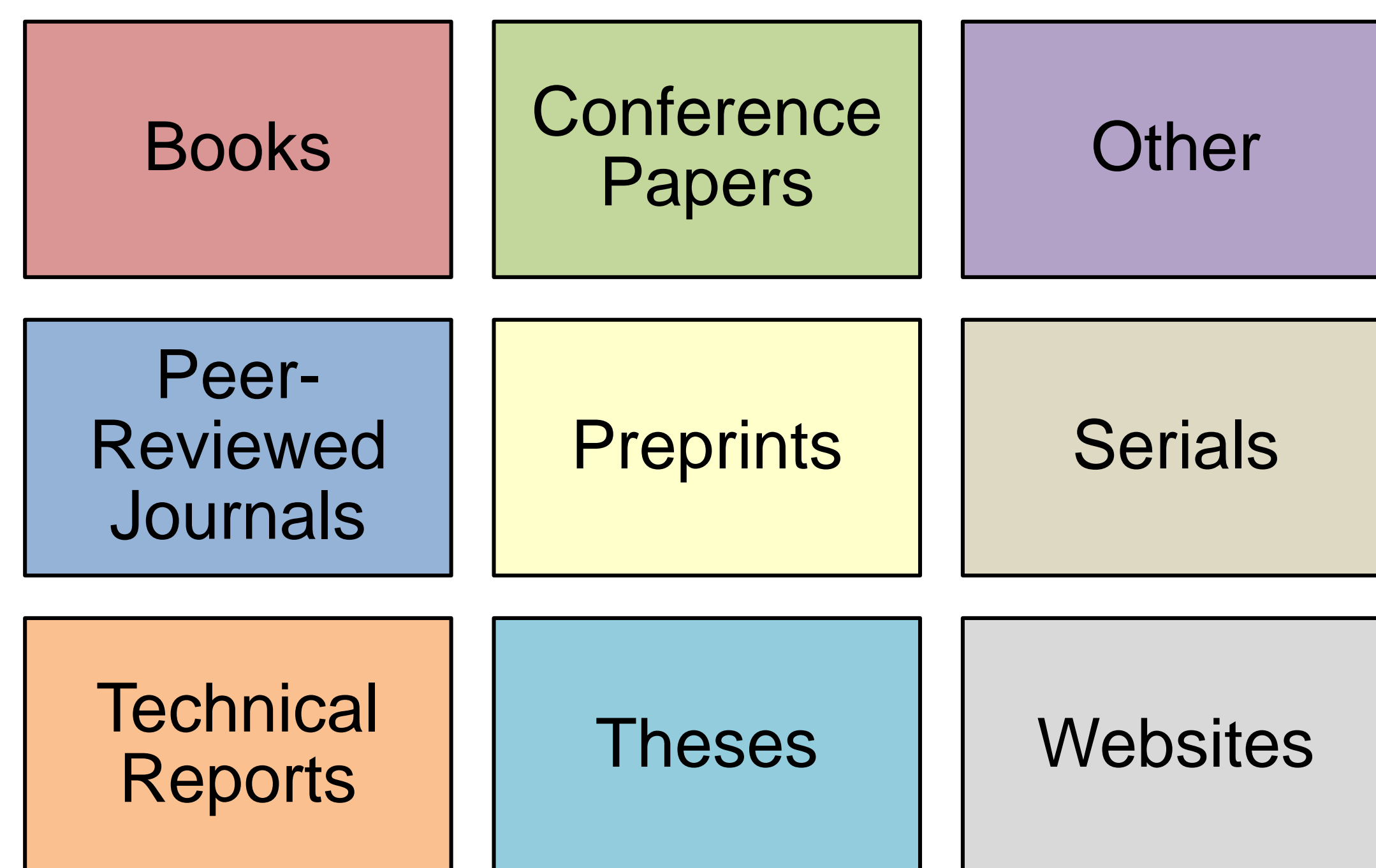
WHY

- Does discipline influence selection of citation categories?
- Does electronic access affect category popularity?
- Is there a decline within the Books category?
- Is there an increase within the Websites category?
- Do faculty influence students to use specific categories over another?

HOW

- Dissertations retrieved from ProQuest's *Dissertations & Theses*.
- ProQuest subjects determined discipline inclusion.
- Dissertations with K-16 pedagogical topics excluded.
- Each bibliographic reference was assigned to one citation category.

CITATION CATEGORIES



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

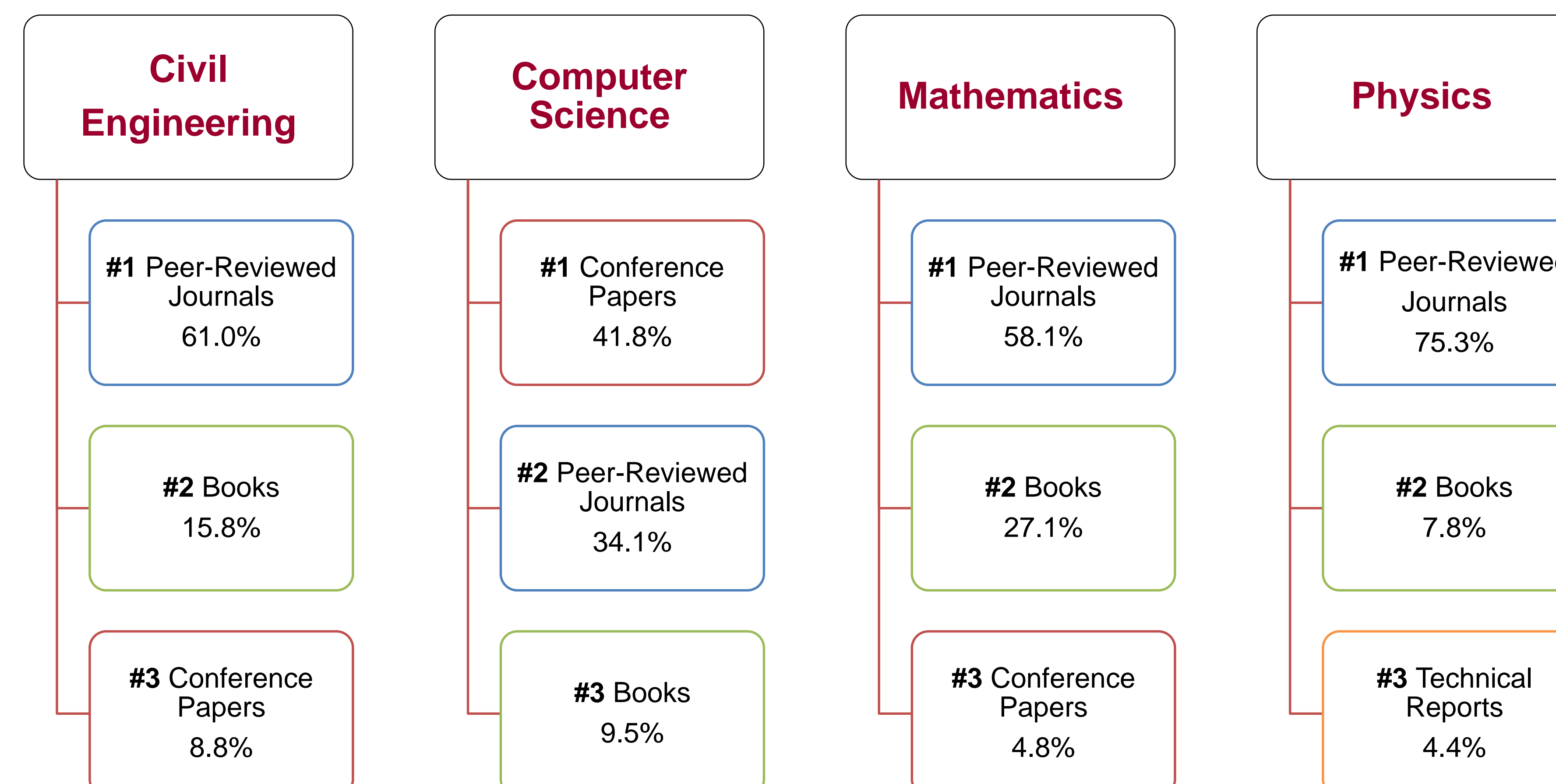
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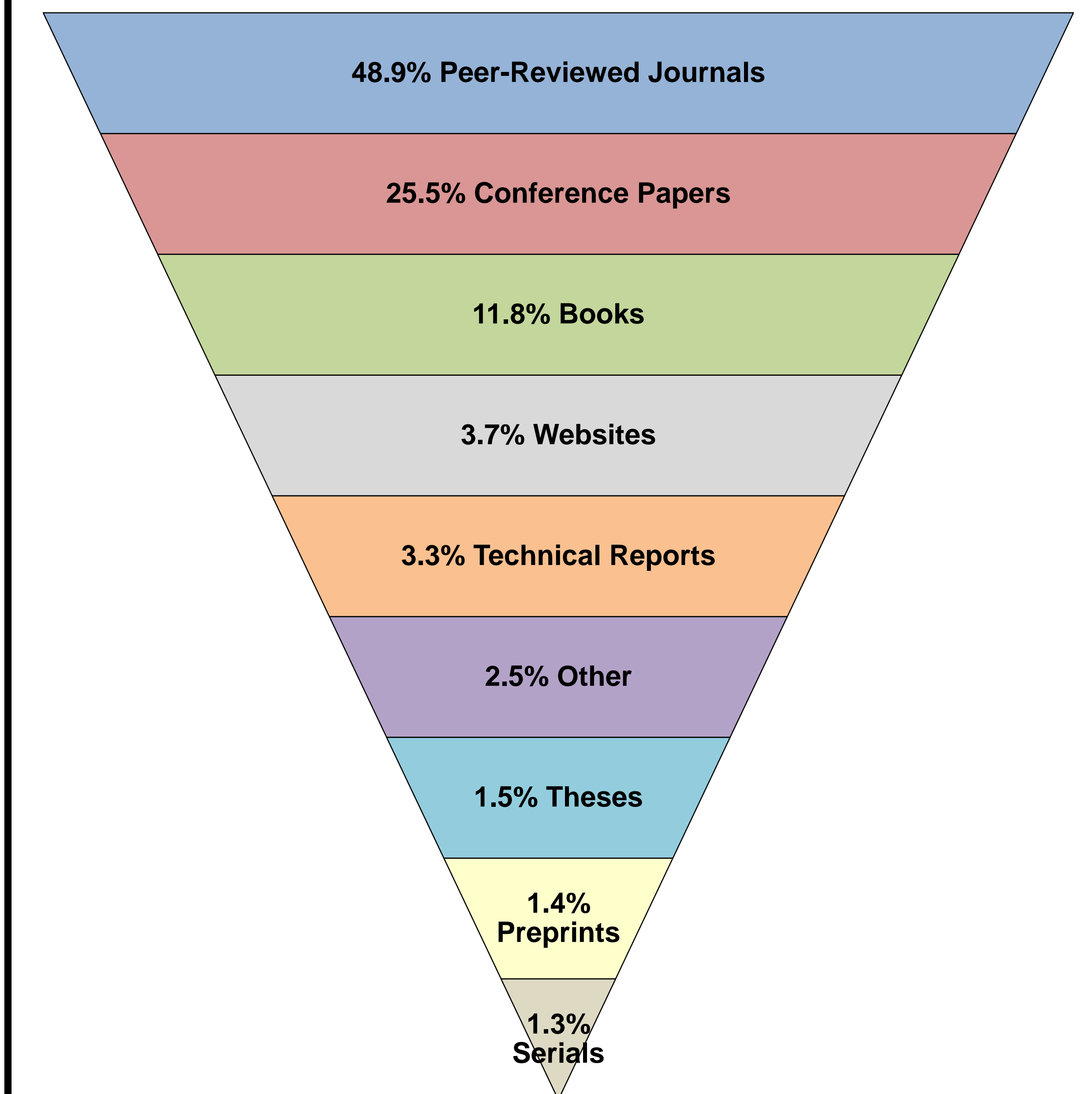
CITATION CATEGORIES RANK MOVEMENT: ALL DISCIPLINES (1998-2012)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Peer-Reviewed Journals	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Conference Papers	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Books	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Other	4	5	4	5	4	5	9	8	7	7	7	6	6	5	6
Technical Reports	5	4	6	4	5	6	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	7	5
Theses	6	6	9	6	6	8	7	9	8	8	8	7	7	6	8
Serials	7	8	8	9	9	9	7	7	6	9	6	8	8	8	7
Preprints	8	7	7	8	8	7	6	6	9	6	9	9	9	9	9
Websites	9	9	5	6	7	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4

CITATION CATEGORIES: DISCIPLINE PREFERENCES (1998-2012)



CITATION CATEGORIES DISTRIBUTION: ALL DISCIPLINES (1998-2012)



FUN FACTS

- The top 3 categories retained their ranking 15 years in a row!
- Researchers don't stray from traditional citation categories.
- Rankings vary by disciplines.
- Biggest Jump: Websites from 9th place (1998) to 4th place (2012).
- Although improved electronic access has increased availability, the Theses category dropped from 6th place (1998) to 8th place (2012).
- There are minimal shifts in popularity among the bottom tier categories.
- Physics preferred technical reports before conference papers, being the only discipline to differ in the top-three categories.
- Computer science comprised almost 50% of the total dissertations.
- Top 3 categories for each discipline accounted for 86% of the total citations.
- Civil engineering contributed only 58 dissertations which may reflect the lack of necessity for advanced degrees for positions outside of academia.
- Wikipedia was cited.

