



EDITORIAL NOTE

What lies ahead for periodicals produced in Brazil?

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To say that 2021 was a tough year for science in Brazil is an understatement. The same can be said for journals produced in the country, most of which did not receive any financial support from the government to cover publication costs for the second consecutive year. Although there is no question that Covid-19 has and is still affecting almost everything in the country (e.g., Martelli Júnior et al. 2020, Santos et al. 2021), the fact is that little has been done to support scientific journals edited in Brazil. More and more editors are pushed towards asking authors for publication fees to mitigate their costs.

So far, the Annals of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences (AABC) is refraining from taking this step, but one cannot be sure for how long this will work. As it is open access, it has been quite hard to keep up with the increasing number of submitted manuscripts (ms), which has more than doubled in the last five years (2016: 830 ms, 2017: 950 ms, 2018: 1281 ms, 2019: 1512 ms, 2020: 1880 ms). The number of issues was increased, as was the number of articles (art) published (2016: 200 art, 2017: 250 art, 2018: 300 art, 2019: 301 art, 2020: 350 art), but this cannot be continued without financial support. It has been quite challenging to avoid a substantial backlog of accepted manuscripts what will inevitably lead to delays in publication time.

Some journals have been commemorating well-deserved rise in their bibliometric indexes (e.g., Rochitte 2021) and overall impact (e.g., Dias 2021). The AABC also has reasons to celebrate: the Impact Factor (IF) has increased in the last years from 0.938 (AABC 2018-IF), to 1.280 (AABC 2019 IF), and again to 1.753 (AABC 2020 IF). This was achieved despite the growing number of published articles, sometimes regarded of having the potential to negatively influence the IF of a journal. Although it is widely known that bibliometric indexes can fluctuate substantially from one year to another, the growth of almost 37% from last year is quite impressive and hard to sustain.

As generally expected, there is a great variation regarding citations, and some attempts were made to have an idea on how papers are influencing bibliometric indexes of the AABC (e.g., Kellner 2020). Among several strategies to improve impact and internalization of this journal, special issues on hot topics (e.g., Davidovich & Bach 2019) were organized and their impact on the journal bibliometric indexes will be evaluated in the near future.

Returning to the lack of government funding for science and scientific publications, perhaps one of the reasons is related to a certain distance or lack of understanding in relation to

scientific needs and activities. Therefore, there is a general sense that science communication must be improved, particularly in Latin America (e.g., Barba et al. 2019). Researchers have also been discussing and evaluating several actions to make scientific activity better known (e.g., Bevilaqua et al. 2021), what became quite important due to Covid-19 (e.g., Pollett & Rivers 2020). The ideal situation would be to get at least some government subsidy for periodicals, as happened until some years ago, in order to expand or at least maintain current publication rates. As this is not happening and the prospects are not encouraging, tougher decisions will have to be taken by editorial boards to avoid declining of bibliometric indexes and increasing publication time.

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