

EDITORIAL

The online *modus operandi* and the advancement of Brazilian nursing journals

Scientific communication, especially that conducted by means of periodicals, has been enriched enormously by the emergence and evolution of the Web in the last three decades, that has made the digital support and availability of online content the *modus operandi* of publication and exchange of scientific information, in all areas of knowledge. This coexists with successive improvements and innovations always oriented to the objective of maintaining and increasing the visibility, access and impact of journals and the research they publish. Nonetheless the publication in paper continues, in the majority of cases with inertia of the legacy of the past and expendable costs; it is inconceivable in the scientific community to have a quality journal without online publication. With the help of mobile devices, such as tablets and smart phones, the coverage of online services is progressively increasing. With the advent of new technologies for wireless networks, there will be ubiquitous access to online content.

Retrieved and processed from the digital file, the online text, particularly the scientific article, emerges on the screens of computers and mobile devices through a gateway operated in virtual space, with numerous links and associated services that enable us to reach similar publications, other works of the authors, the number of times the text was accessed and cited. The possibility exists to comment and discuss among readers. It also allows for printing of the text on paper. The online article detaches itself from the issue (or number) of the journal with autonomy and availability as if it were a hard copy ready to be displayed and shared from any location. The bibliographic indexes reinforce this autonomy through the direct connection to the bibliographic reference of the full text of the article, i.e., dispensing its location by identifying the volume, number and pagination. This autonomy also allowed for the emergence of megaperiodicals such as PLoS One, that published more than a thousand articles per month, on average, in 2011: an infeasible operation if using printed paper. A typical application of this new condition of the digital article still in the classical structure is the publication before the issue is ready, that is, shortly after the manuscript is approved and the text edited. Early publication (*ahead of print*) strengthens and clarifies the journal as a space that directs the flow of scientific information of one thematic area. This aggregates value to two functions of this flow. On the one hand, it satisfies the basic demand of authors to see their research evaluated by peers and communicated as quickly as possible. On the other, it refreshes more rapidly the space of scientific knowledge. The research can be read and cited more quickly. Coupled with open access, the advance publication accelerates the universal availability of scientific research.

The Brazilian journals and those of other Latin American countries have pioneered the adoption of the online *modus operandi* with open access, supported since 1998 by the Program SciELO of FAPESP and the Virtual Health Library (VHL), both with the technical cooperation of BIREME / PAHO / WHO, with enormous gain in visibility. With systems of evaluation and qualification, SciELO and VHL contribute systematically to improving the quality of the periodicals. In this context and fueled by the advance of Brazilian research and the expansion of coverage of international indices,

the Brazilian journals acquired greater international presence and currently communicate over a third of the national scientific production referenced in the multidisciplinary indices Web of Sciences and Scopus, and assert themselves as an integral part of the infrastructure and skills of Brazilian research. Investment in the development of Brazilian journals, including professionalization and internationalization, is a line of action that is essential to promoting and ensuring broad communication, visibility and impact of Brazilian research. This line of action brings together editors, scientific societies, and funding agencies for research and scientific communication ⁽¹⁻²⁾.

The presence of Brazilian journals is more pronounced in some disciplines, such as with the case of nursing that, at the end of 2011, reached 14 journals indexed in the VHL Nursing, 7 in SciELO, 5 in Scopus, 4 in WoS and 3 of the 89 titles listed in the JCR 2010. Considering as a reference the universe of 5293 original and review articles published in 2011 by these 89 nursing titles indexed in WoS, Brazil (with 435 articles) ranks third in the world ranking, after the United States (2397) and Australia (517) and with more articles than all the other BRICS (151). Of the 435 articles by authors with Brazilian affiliation, 398 (91%) are published in three Brazilian magazines, the *Revista Latino-americana de Enfermagem* (*Latin American Journal of Nursing*) (36%), the *Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP* (*Journal of the School of Nursing of USP*) (33%) and *Acta Paulista de Enfermagem* (*Acta Paulista Nursing*) (23%). The first two publish predominantly in English, while the *Acta Paulista de Enfermagem* publishes in Portuguese. The *Revista Latino-americana de Enfermagem* has a greater impact factor and is in the third quartile of the distribution of the Impact Factor of 89 nursing journals in JCR 2010. Only 8% of the 435 articles with Brazilian affiliation include international collaboration. Among the 398 articles published by those three journals, 14% of the articles have at least one foreign affiliate.

The challenge of professionalism and international insertion applies in particular to nursing journals. The full adoption of the online modus operandi should guide this process. *Acta Paulista de Enfermagem* took that step in 2012 with the decision to publish exclusively online, with the option of early publication.

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