

# Impact factor and insertion of the ABO in the world scientific literature

## *Fator de impacto e inserção do ABO na literatura científica mundial*

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The ABO (Arquivos Brasileiros de Oftalmologia) is published since 73 years ago. Originally founded for the dissemination of scientific research and continuous updating in Brazil, was maintained at the expense of the hard work of its editors (Rubens Belfort Mattos, Rubens Belfort Mattos Jr. and Harley Bicas) with the support of the editorial staff. The ABO began disseminating the scientific work of colleagues who often sat at the table and lived in the same region. Readers of ABO were also not very far, due to the limits of its distribution.

In July 2002, the ABO was accepted at the SciELO<sup>®</sup> database, with backward indexation in the last two issues of 1999. As free access to scientific information is a condition "sine qua non" for indexing at the SciELO, the entire production of the ABO from the end of 1999 became available for free reading in the largest source of scientific production in Latin America. Readers were then not limited by the geographic scope of its distribution. Over the past 10 years, more than 450,000 articles had been downloaded from ABO through SciELO. In January 2005 the limits were extended further with the return of the ABO indexation to the PubMed<sup>®</sup>/MEDLINE<sup>®</sup> database. Today, the ABO is the only journal in ophthalmology in Latin America to have its production released in PubMed<sup>®</sup>.

After the expansion of the boundaries, measuring its insertion was the natural way to go. The most used tool for measuring the insertion of a journal is an analysis of how often articles published in that journal were cited (included in reference lists) in other articles of the same or other journal, indexed in a particular database, in a given time. Although imperfect, this method is used as an indicator of the global inclusion of a journal. The international databases most often employed to citation analysis of journals are: Scopus<sup>®</sup> - SCImago Journal Rank (Elsevier<sup>®</sup>) and ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>®</sup> - Journal Citation Reports<sup>®</sup> (Thomson Reuters<sup>®</sup>). The basic difference of these databases is the universe of indexed journals. Scopus<sup>®</sup> has in its database of around 18,000 journals, while the ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>®</sup> assesses about 10,000 journals.

ABO is indexed in Scopus<sup>®</sup> since 2000 and is currently the paper with the greatest SJR (Rank SCImago Journal<sup>®</sup>) in ophthalmology in Latin America. In January 2008, ABO has become part of the ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>®</sup>, considered the most important database of scientific citations. The result of measurement of the citations made by ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>®</sup> is published in the Journal Citation Reports<sup>®</sup> (JCR) which contains several indicators, the best known being the Impact Factor (Impact Factor<sup>®</sup>). The impact factor of a journal in a given year is calculated based on the number of times articles published in the journal in the two previous years were cited in that year by all journals in that database. The JCR is published once a year and the impact factor of the ABO for the year 2010, was first presented in June 2011. The ABO has published 297 citable items in 2008 and 2009, receiving 118 citations to these articles in 2010. Thus, the impact factor of the ABO was 0.397 (118/297) in 2010. Looking more closely at the figures in the report of the JCR, we notice that 23% of these citations come from articles published in the ABO in 2010 (self-citations). By analyzing the citation of articles according to the language in which they were published, we notice that the number of citations of papers written in English was higher, so that the impact factor of articles in Portuguese and English would be 0.17 and 0.52, respectively.

Researchers around the world and especially in Brazil rank their choices of journals for publication according to impact factor. The Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), which is the government agency in the Ministry of Education responsible for coordinating the post-graduation programs in Brazil, stratified the quality of the journals based exclusively from the ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>®</sup> Impact Factor. With the publication of its impact factor, the ABO has moved from category B3 to B2 in the area of Medicine III, where ophthalmology is classified. According to CAPES, currently an article published in the ABO has a weight equivalent to 40% by weight of an article published in a journal with high impact. Despite that the position of CAPES have been the target of much criticism, this is a fait accompli, and if we expect to compete with the international journals in the authors' preference for publication, we have to achieve an impact factor above 1.34 to elevate to another category in CAPES.

The ABO will continue to act in the two poles of this determination, fighting for a greater space for national publications, especially those with free access, and working to improve our indicators.

To improve our insertion we must act to improve the content of the publications of the ABO. This work has been done tirelessly by our associated editors, editorial board members and reviewers who have the task of selecting manuscripts for publication that present good quality and the possibility of being cited internationally. The consequence of this action is to increase the number of rejections and the search for a greater number of articles to be submitted for publication. We noticed an increasing demand by foreign authors ABO coming, and that should increase even more with the ABO index in JCR, being the only journal in ophthalmology in Latin America in this database. We must also invest more in spreading the ABO in international scientific communities. We have been receiving a large number of excellent articles written by Brazilian authors that, for sure, would be able to be published in international journals with greater impact. We thank and feel honored by the choice of authors to publish in the ABO, as well as those who remember citing the ABO articles in international publications.

We believe that scientific knowledge should be unrestricted, so we will continue providing free access to our content, which contributes to the improvement of our global insertion. Our community has grown, the geographical boundaries have disappeared for the global scientific communication, and our neighborhood is now the world.

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