

### **Impact factor: the purpose of its use**

During the last decade, we have seen that the information revolution has changed the scientific publishing worldwide. The consolidation of new technological sources and market globalization forces a novel paradigm regarding the role, importance and impact of the information as a factor of competitiveness.

Increasingly, knowledge has been set as a source of wealth for many nations, because organizations today are constantly challenged to face adaptations in environmental and technological laws as well as in primarily competitive strategies.

In Brazil, it is not any different. We recognize that our technological development in various areas of knowledge has greatly changed, and for the better, since we no longer compete with our Latin American neighbors. Now we compete with developed nations that present centuries of research experience in fields of science and technology.

It is important to consider that recently, within the last 40 years, the scientific activity in the Latin America has gradually begun to consolidate its scientific independence laying down the foundation to build our own history of development.

The scientific publishing sector in Brazil has adopted metrics – including bibliometrics, scientometrics and impact factors – that are based on indexes. We must understand that we are passing through a moment of globalization in relation to our intellectual production and all these mechanisms have been used by the most developed nations and institutions in the world.

The comprehension that our national journals play a major role and have the responsibility to disseminate information to the scientific community constitutes an adequate beginning, since the act of responsible publishing assures a way for proper analysis and scientific progress evaluation at the national level.

I have seen many articles that place too much emphasis on the impact factor. This focus has developed to become a neurosis.

There are researchers using unofficial numbers (other than published by Journal Citation Reports from Thomson Reuters) that affect the integrity of the content of a

publication, waste time and, worst of all, jeopardize the effort and name of all persons that work for a better development of a particular publication.

### **Impact does not exist without quality content**

There are no miracles!

Governments, universities, research institutes, researchers and editors must know that in developed countries high quality research is well planned, justified and guided by certified methods and data analysis, which are thoroughly checked.

There has to be a serious commitment to create an adequate environment, interest and support for indexing national journals within international databases. These conditions will make it possible for our best published works to rise beyond the local sphere and reach the international scientific community.

Another important point: many academic authorities, publishers and researchers are already indexing in renowned international databases.

The most important question is: what to do with the production of specialized areas of study? What does their impact and leverage signify?

If a journal does not maintain a level of excellence in quality, it may lose indexation. The development of indicators for impact and productivity is an important task, but the key issue is what to do with the results of this work? What is the purpose of publishing and research?

Let's give this matter serious consideration.

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