

Editorial

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How to Increase the Production of Scientific Articles Published in Indexed Journals

In the current issue of the Revista de la Facultad de Medicina the article “Scientific Production by the Academic Departments of the School of Medicine, Universidad Nacional de Colombia. 2000-2012” (1), in which some indicators related to science, innovation and technology developed in our Faculty can be observed, stands out. It is worth noting that the production of scientific articles per full-time professor was close to one per year, thus, if the School of Medicine of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia wants to position itself as the best in Colombia and one of the bests at Latin America (2), it is necessary to increase the productivity of master and doctorate dissertations that can be used as basis for writing original articles that can be published in indexed journals.

Similarly, it is also necessary for residents in medical specialties to finish their thesis and from these research projects, produce original scientific articles to be published at such indexed journals (3). If these two items were accomplished the scientific productivity indicator could be doubled or tripled in the upcoming years.

Currently at the School of Medicine there are around 40 professors who hold a PhD, which means these professors should produce a lot more than one scientific article per year. To achieve this it is crucial for them to lead research groups ranked by Colciencias where undergraduate and postgraduate students are able to learn to investigate, making such activity a common practice of their academic life.

One objective of scientific production is to increase visibility and recognition in the national and international academic communities, which is directly related to the number of citations of both, journals and authors. According to the abovementioned article, there are 3873 scientific articles (N=8777, 44.1%) (1), a remarkable task achieved by our School of Medicine, however, it is important to note that, unlike other regions, the number of citations of these articles is rather low, which is understandable, since many professors do not regularly cite the articles published in the Faculty of Medicine Journals, nor do they cite their own works published in national journals. Do they assume the quality of these articles to be too low to include them in their references

lists? Or are they ignorant about the great and hard local work regarding the production of Colombian medical literature?

At present, the School of Medicine has four scientific journals. Two of these journals are already indexed (at national and international indexing databases): the Revista de Salud Pública (4) and the Revista de la Facultad de Medicina (5); one currently in the process of becoming an indexed journal: Morfolia (6), and a fourth one, which is publishing some of its first issues: Revista Case Reports (7). This last journal is mainly published in English (although it is currently publishing its articles both in English and Spanish), which puts in consideration of the other three journals the future challenge of publishing in this language as well, a heated academic debate which allows different opinions. Nevertheless, it is clear for the Revista de la Facultad de Medicina that, in order to achieve higher positions at the several rankings of serialized scientific journals, it must be fully published in English in the medium term. For example, in the SJR Scimago Journal & Country Rank of Scopus (8) it is possible to observe the dramatic rise in terms of impact factor of Colombia Médica (9), a journal published by Universidad del Valle that after its decision of publishing only in English language and its inclusion in important databases has greatly increased its number of citations.

As a final note, is worthy to note how the increase of the scientific articles production to be published in indexed journals absolutely lies in the faculty members of the School of Medicine, who, in my opinion, must show a relentless commitment to science and to the University in order to achieve this task needs to be relentless.

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