



EDITORIAL

Some observations on the publication of articles in Medicine



The University is not only a school for adults, but it plays a major role in the search of new knowledge, in other words, research. In addition to assisting patients, teaching colleagues and students – undergraduates as well as post-graduates – it is important to highlight the need and duty of doctors to be involved in research.

This does not necessarily require a great set of skills or special knowledge; it can be as simple as to cooperate in a workgroup that searches for new knowledge of a specific disease, or more complex activities, like designing and implementing a prospective/comparative study in search of new evidence and different paths than those previously established.

In order to broadcast knowledge locally, domestically or internationally, it is necessary to publish the conducted research. Activity at a convention, like a conference, or a poster displaying the results of research, are far from ideal broadcasting and, in the scientific world, these are considered to be preliminary or simplistic. Final publication is essential in order to transcend and make a difference. To publish implies finding a magazine interested in the work submitted for publication. In this sense quality, originality and significance are factors which would make its acceptance and spreading possible, which is part of the final process of quality research, thus the popular saying “publish or perish”; this stresses, in an exaggerated way, the importance of having a research work finally published.

In this issue of “*Medicina Universitaria*” Tamez-Pérez et al. analyze the publication trends in a series of high-impact publications. This is measured by the number of references a magazine has versus the number of articles published in a specific period of time. These magazines include The New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet and JAMA, among others, hence the high quality of the articles and studies – comparative, randomized and prospective – accepted in these publications. This is the base of their relevance, hence their acceptance and acknowledgement in the community. In the aforementioned journals, we rarely find articles from “developing countries”, a group to which

Mexico belongs. Studies of major clinical significance require a large number of patients, years of follow-up and money for their elaboration/culmination, and are supported or originate within the pharmaceutical industry or by a society or group in the US or Western Europe. This occurs and will continue to occur until our organization and ability to develop studies with a higher evidence level materializes. Until then, Mexico will remain in the background in the field of innovation, ideas and contributions to the world of science. However, we must recognize those researchers who strive on a daily basis to show their abilities to innovate despite how complicated working in a developing country may be. Personally, the presence of high-quality articles in high-impact publications, articles which are the product of the resourcefulness, invention and perseverance of invariably optimistic Mexican doctors, never ceases to amaze.

In the medical world we have the advantage of being able to search for valuable information in different types of studies, from an outstanding clinical case, to retrospective observational studies and case-control, among others. Everything is of value.

On the other hand, in this day and age, the publication of articles in these high-profile journals is not necessarily that important. The spreading of knowledge through the internet nowadays is such that “information democracy” has reached science, it just takes the touch of a button to access information of any publication indexed in Pubmed or any other entries. This allows for studies and papers of supposedly less significance, published in low-impact journals, to be easily seen, eventually referenced and obviously transcending and having an impact in the scientific world, thus in the benefit of patients and their surroundings. The one must is language: English, whether we like it or not, is the language of modern science, therefore “*Medicina Universitaria*” has decided to take this step forward towards internationalization. We are on the right track, the speed can be improved and we will continue trying, eventually getting us closer to the major journals in the scientific world.

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