

Difficulties and Scientific Information Force at a Moment of Crisis

It is noticeable the similarity between the growth curves of people infected by COVID-19 and the curve of scientific publications on the subject, at least in indexed journals such as PubMed/Medline, until the end of May 2020.¹ Thus, good published articles in other indexed basis should not be discarded either. And, as mentioned before, also a pandemic of publications has gained approximately 18.000 published articles in a period of four months of COVID-19.¹ (Provided information from SciELO Newsletter in Mexico, June 2020).

The increase of publications in the medical and health areas in general and of the epidemic outbreaks, it is a well know fact, and this illustrates a great interest in researchers, who tried to demonstrate this situation by clarifying the arisen issues at such point, that many centers and institutions suspended their own research programs at that moment, and only afterwards, returning to them later on. Whereas, these centers are the environment where researchers have the expertise in scientific publication, making it easier to happen. Moreover, the opening of many journals in using fast track as of pre-prints, it is a great incentive for all of those who are interested in this utmost important issue. As of great offering, and therefore, a great accumulation of acquired knowledge, we would like to comment on an aspect of a general theory related to a production of new information since the 1970s by Lukaszewicz.² In the article "*The Ignorance Explosion*", published in the Ann of NY Academy Sci. 1972, the author proposes a logical model, indicating that, beyond to the knowledge accumulated, although, its interface is still unknown, a recent acquired knowledge generates a great opportunity of new information becoming a necessity to open new investigations in a world which also is, an ignorant world. In our daily experience, at a post graduation research center, for instance, we have verified that each thesis or article has three, four, five, or even more new ideas and proposals that can produce new information which are distributed and presented at scientific events or in publications. In the case of seeking urgent knowledge, from of course, urgent problems, a question arises to know what is the most reliable guarantee in the quality or the probability of knowledge on the issue at stake. Here of course, comes the responsibility of each journal, - in particular, in the era of pre-prints and in an epidemic urgency - in the sense of announcing the most trustful information, specially because, this process involves the support to care and care for the lives of so many human beings. In fact, the error or the insufficient information released, not only would increase the parallel field of ignorance but would be tragical and, anti-ethical. So, what shall we do? Surely that the editorial committees know very well and try to understand this demand. It is to assume that such demand will require greater participation of manuscript reviewers, and, therefore, we may even speak of an almost pandemic activity of a peer review. We do not know beforehand, but it would very wholesome and even more of a necessity, that each journal should do their own assessment by comparing between their regular percentage of acceptance of submitted manuscripts with the percentage of pre-print type manuscripts, after peer reviewing and of those that would be published permanently. This would indicate the consistency of the journal, assessed at a pandemic moment as severe as nowadays. It would be an important self-criticisim to deal with a very difficult social situation and its extent.

We are all in a fundamental struggle, a fight among a brute force, blinded by a terrible virus, the force of its intelligence and human's feelings, compassion and hope.

For all of us to seek knowledge, we, the researchers and the scientific journals, are also seeking care and preserving Life.



References

1. Perez MJM. ¿Cuándo llegará la “desescalada” de la información científica sobre La COVID-19? [acceso 1 Jul 2020]. Disponível em: <https://coronavirusbiblioh12o.wordpress.com/2020/06/05/cuando-llegara-la-desescalada-de-la-informacion-cientifica-sobre-la-covid-19/>
2. Lukasiewicz J. The Ignorance Explosion: a contribution to the study of a confrontation of man with the complexity of science-based society and environment. *Ann NY Acad Sci.* 1972.

José Eulálio Cabral Filho ¹

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9121-9910>

¹ Editor-in-Chief of the Brazilian Journal of Mother and Child Health.