

EDITORIAL

SCIENTOMETRIC INDICATORS AND THE BRAZILIAN NURSING SCIENCE

Scientific productivity constitutes a relevant aspect in the evaluation process for graduate programs. Therefore, scientific productivity has been the main criteria to evaluate the scientific performance of researchers worldwide.

According to Spinak ⁽¹⁾, since 1989 science is considered as an information production system, especially information published for permanent documents and available to the scientific community. Furthermore, according to Harqi and Yuhua ⁽²⁾, the evaluation of scientific productivity can be done in terms of bibliometric indicators of published work. Garrido and Rodrigues ⁽³⁾ stated that scientometry, known as quantitative research for scientific productivity, was initiated in the 1960's, when the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) and the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) developed methodologies to evaluate scientific and technological activities.

The scientometry applies bibliometric techniques to the evaluation of science. Scientometry examines the development of scientific politics, taking into consideration science not only as a discipline, but also as an economical activity. ⁽³⁾ Therefore, scientometry allows the development of indicators to subsidize the evaluation of human resources dedicated to science and technology. Such indicators allow the measurement of research activities and the interpretation of technological innovations for a specific area of science, such as nursing. In addition, measurement and interpretation of specific research productivities in nursing must consider the geographic area in which the productivities occurred. The development of Brazilian science occurs predominantly in the southeast region, and in graduate programs. In this context, nurse researchers have increased the number of scientific manuscripts published in journals indexed by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI).

According to Spinak ⁽¹⁾, there is criticism regarding the criteria used to index scientific journals by international databases, because these criteria may not be appropriate to evaluate the productivity of science and technology for peripheral countries. Spinak ⁽¹⁾ also noted that in any area of science, the published manuscripts concentrate in the same multidisciplinary journals with a high impact factor. These journals, approximately three thousand indexed in ISI, cover 90% of the literature considered to have high scientific rigor and value by the academic community. That is, still according to Spinak ⁽¹⁾, an epistemologic reason explicated by the historical process of the criteria used by ISI to index scientific journals. Other publications, specifically in nursing, addresses this same issue; for example, Broome ⁽⁴⁾ and Sousa, Cooksey-James, and Driessnack ⁽⁵⁾ have discussed the journal citation index (JRC), which contains the list of nursing journals indexed by ISI. These nurse authors recommended careful consideration in the use of the ISI criteria to evaluate nurse researchers because the number of nursing journals indexed in ISI are insufficient to accommodate quality scientific productivity of the national and international nursing community; other criteria must be considered as well when evaluating the productivity of nurse researchers.

Because of these considerations, the writers of this editorial believe that nursing science in countries under development must create and maintain their own database to index nurse researchers productivity. The “*II Conferencia Iberoamericana de Editores de Revistas de Enfermería*” that will occur in November, in Mexico, will discuss these issues and propose strategies to strengthen the Iberoamerican journals of Nursing.

The journal “*Acta Paulista de Enfermagem*”, through its editorial body is solidary and sensitive in the search for new strategies to facilitate the dissemination of Brazilian Nursing Science, in order to measure the impact factor of its productivity compared to countries with similar characteristics. Yet, this editorial body intends on using criteria not less significant than other countries with more resources. This is an important factor because countries with more resources for scientific productivity have a socio-economic perfil quite different than those countries known as “peripheral” nations.

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