

If we are not indexed, we do not exist?

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While I was studying medicine, long before the rapid and irrepressible irruption of the Internet and before the era of the iPhone and APPs, I recall an afternoon when I leafed through my paperback books and notes. I remember one book in particular that was a much-anticipated reissue that had just arrived at the library. The smell of paper and ink came as breaths of inspiration. Soon, I had a whirlwind of ideas and I decided to write. I went then to the shelves where the oldest books were, looking for information about something that I can no longer remember; however, I do remember the vision I had while climbing the stairs. I imagined an endless set of stairs shaped like hexagons and an unforgettable tale written by Jorge Luis Borges[1] came to mind, The Library of Babel, which says:

"Like all the men in the library, I have traveled in my youth; I have pilgrimaged in search of a book, perhaps the catalog of catalogs ...."

Many years have passed since that afternoon, and many more as well since I graduated and became a doctor. By the way, I do not know what I wrote that time and if I even wrote anything at all. Now, as I sit in front of the computer, I find myself faced with the task of writing about the importance of scientific publications that are in indexed journals. We start from the following base: Internet is a vast digital library (perhaps infinite) in which just a click or the simple typing of a few letters or words is all it takes to access this network of knowledge; knowledge that is supported by technological progress and the globalization of communications. This great advance has favored the new generations of professionals and students [2] with new and improved knowledge and the integration of interdisciplinary research groups. All of this has occurred extremely fast. Let's take Facebook and Twitter [3] as examples. These have emerged as the favorites to be pointed out. Facebook, for example, allows us to share messages and information in a fast and extensive

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manner, and today, it is a massive means of communication around the world. Twitter, also allows the exchange of information quickly, but in this case, it is limited to 140 characters of words in its messages. Nevertheless, it has millions of active users around the world.

Undoubtedly, up until now, everything seems to flow perfectly. Technology, the Internet and all of its subsets have allowed us to be better informed and to become, more or less, writers, either as seekers of individual knowledge or as part of a group that writes a work to be published.

Here, the subject already raises some specific difficulties and particularities. On the scale of knowledge, we have doctors or scientists who want to make their work known. How do they do it? Where and who do they resort to?

We already know that internet allows millions of people to be connected; people who can access information instantly just by using a device that accesses the network. We also know that the network has general and specific information, and if I want to start a work on a specific branch of knowledge, I must take the initial steps. The first is to publish. Science barely exists until it is published [4] and to publish, I must communicate with an editorial committee, which will take it into account and review my work to see if it meets the requirements of length, originality and quality, of course. The authors are frequently reviewed by their peers (doctors who interview and edit the work of other doctors) and the same authors sometimes form an editorial and scientific committee [5]. Publication in paper magazines has been giving way to digitalization. Undoubtedly, it has been a good change, in detriment that is to those printed magazines of high cost and reduced circulation, which notwithstanding are still considered as a social dissemination of knowledge. The classic forms of communication (telephone, mail) are still in use, but it is no longer necessary to move physically. Smartphones, Skype and others have eliminated that problem perfectly.

Regarding the publication platform, the ISI index (later renamed Web of Science (WoS)) was exclusively used for many years and it was the only international and multidisciplinary tool available to

access science, technology literature, biomedicine and other disciplines [6].

Researchers publish to make themselves known and await recognition of their work. On the other hand, the evaluators of said work, aside from their own knowledge and skills, have tools, indices and appropriate bibliometric indicators. We shall stop at two specific instruments. The Impact factor, which in simple terms, the number of quotes a publication has, and as its name says, it measures the impact at a specific moment in time. Without a doubt it gives the author the desired visualization, nevertheless, it may be a fleeting and circumstantial fame, and for that, the Hirsch Index was created. This index considers two factors (and their interchange): range vs. quotes. Its creator Jorge Hirsch, a University of California academic, has called it a career indicator [7]. This same improvement was carried out with the WoS, and as of 2004, SCOPUS, a database superior to the WoS, was launched. Scopus currently indexes more than twenty thousand magazines, almost double its predecessor.

Thus, indexation now occupies the central part of this article. Indexing is an accreditation system and the author who has passed all of the hurdles and whose article is considered in an indexed magazine, gains prestige and international prominence [8]. By being in this large database, your readers will be part of a supranational community and scientific communication between the researchers will improve. It could bring promotions or access to new funds to carry out other research. It is true that young professionals may not have a high Hirsch index or score but becoming a part of an indexed journal leads to a new world, where universities and institutions exist, and my work receives quotes and correspondence.

So, the one that is not "indexed" does not exist?

Of course not. Great work will always attract attention; bring about research, the finding of other paths and the certainty -as Borges said- that on a shelf, precious books are held[1].

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