

EDITORIAL

The uneasiness of Colombian dental journals in the face of the imminent indexing model.

El desasosiego de las revistas colombianas de odontología ante el inminente modelo de indexación

Jorge Homero Wilches-Visbal¹  | Kelly Johana Obispo-Salazar¹  | José Amable Araujo-Blanco¹ 

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Institutional affiliation

¹ Universidad del Magdalena, Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud, Programa de Odontología, Santa Marta, Colombia.

² Universidad del Magdalena, Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud, Programa de Psicología, Santa Marta, Colombia.

³ Universidad del Magdalena, Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud, Programa de Odontología, Santa Marta, Colombia.

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Correspondence author: Jorge Homero Wilches Visbal. Address: Laboratorio de Biofísica, Edificio de Innovación y Emprendimiento, Universidad del Magdalena, Calle 29H3 # 22-01, Santa Marta, Colombia. Mobile: 3195866093 Email: jhwilchev@gmail.com.

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ABSTRACT

In November 2022, the Colombian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Minciencias), headed by its Directorate of Science, published the document containing the proposed adjustment to the new indexing model for Colombian scientific journals - Publindex with the objective of "expanding the participation of researchers and national scientific journals in international scientific communication circles". The ultimate goal is that Colombian publications increase in quantity and quality (impact) within the global context.

Key words

Electronic journals; journal impact factor; theoretical models; dentistry; Colombia; Publindex.

RESUMEN

En noviembre de 2022, el Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación de Colombia (Minciencias), en cabeza de su Dirección de Ciencia, publicó el documento en el que se encuentra la propuesta de ajuste al nuevo modelo de indexación de revistas científicas colombianas – Publindex con el objetivo de “ampliar la participación de los investigadores y las revistas científicas nacionales en los círculos internacionales de comunicación científica”. El fin último es que las publicaciones colombianas aumenten en cantidad y calidad (impacto) dentro del contexto mundial.

Palabras clave

Revistas electrónicas; factor de impacto de la revista; modelos teóricos; odontología; Colombia; Publindex.

In November 2022, the Colombian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Minciencias), headed by its Directorate of Science, published the document containing the proposed adjustment to the new indexing model for Colombian scientific journals - Publindex with the objective of "expanding the participation of researchers and national scientific journals in international scientific communication circles". The ultimate goal is that Colombian publications increase in quantity and quality (impact) within the global context.¹

The new model is based on the following actors or precedents: i) model of the call 910 of 2021 and experts for the evaluation of the quality of journals in several technical roundtables. According to Minciencias, the experts were rigorously selected from

candidates proposed by associations such as ASCUN (Colombian Association of Universities), ASEUC (Association of University Publishers of Colombia) and ACIET (Colombian Association of Higher Education Institutions). Among the selection criteria were: doctoral training, publications with international impact, knowledge in scientometrics and categorization as a senior researcher, as a minimum.²

In addition, Minciencias opened a public, consultative and open web form on the implications and changes to the current one in order to collect comments of various kinds that would allow improving the proposal. However, the form only allowed up to 500 words of comments, which, given the importance of the call, was very limited.³ For this reason, some authors have decided to publish their comments on the model more widely in other academic spaces.^{3,4}

Eight years ago, Minciencias promoted a substantial change in the way of evaluating national journals, incorporating the impact factors of the most relevant international databases and/or search engines: *Scimago Journal Rank* (SJR) associated to Scopus, *Journal Citation Report* (JCR) to Web of Science (WoS) and H5 to Google Scholar (GS). To that extent, a new public management was introduced in the calculative hierarchization of university work that involves all its actors: professors, researchers, research groups and countries, in order to make scientific work more efficient and qualified.³

According to the Scimago Country Rank, the country's production of articles in Scopus journals has increased by nearly 60% between 2016 and 2022 and the number of journals increased from 99 to 136 in the same period, meaning an increase of 37%, placing it as the second Latin American country with the second largest number of journals in the SJR. In addition, there has been an increasing positioning of Colombian journals in the first two quartiles of this indicator. It could then be said that the ministry has fulfilled part of what it set out to do in 2016.¹

The model proposed in 2022 by Minciencias becomes more restrictive and problematic, for two reasons: i) journals that do not appear in the SJR or JCR can only be classified in category C, provided they are in quartile 1 or 2 (Figure 1) of those declared in *The All Science Journal Classification* and ii) the impact by combination of metrics (ICM) to be used in these cases will not only take into account the H5 value (as at present) but also the CiteScore (CS) and the H5 of Scopus. The latter two are given greater weighting.⁴ However, it is not clear how the Scopus H5 and CS of journals not included in this database will be computed, unlike the H5 of GS, which is obtained through *Publish or Perish*.⁵ Another doubt is whether the reproducibility of the MCI can be guaranteed by any researcher, for purposes of transparency or claims.

In the current classification model, 80% of the dental journals that until 2015 had been classified in Publindex at least once, were excluded since 2016. Indeed, since then, only 3 Colombian dental journals made presence in the ranking: *Revista de la Facultad de Odontología de la Universidad de Antioquia* (ISSN: 2145-7670), *Revista Nacional de Odontología* (ISSN: 2357-4607) and *Ces Odontología* (ISSN: 2215-9185); the latter two more than once. The main reason for exclusion was the low impact (in terms of GS H5) and, secondly, for being in a very competitive subject area, in which journals of medicine, nursing or biomedical sciences are present.⁵

Category	Scientific Journal Categorization	
	By inclusion in SJR, JCR and Scopus	By quartiles in MCI
A1	Scientific journal ranked in quartile one (Q1) of the Journal Citation Reports (JCR), the Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) or the CiteScore of Scopus.	
A2	Scientific journal ranked in quartile two (Q2) of the Journal Citation Reports (JCR), the Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) or the CiteScore of Scopus.	
B	Scientific journal ranked in quartile three (Q3) of the Journal Citation Reports (JCR), the Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) or the CiteScore of Scopus.	
C	Scientific journal ranked in quartile fourth (Q4) of the Journal Citation Reports (JCR), the Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) or the CiteScore of Scopus.	Scientific journal located in the first or second quartile of impact by combination of metrics (top 50% of its representative subarea).

Figure 1. Categorization of indexed or approved journals in the classification model proposed by Publindex - Minciencias, 2022. Source: taken from Minciencias (2022)¹.

If the current model, which does not include Scopus H5 and CS, was already difficult to deal with, the proposed model seems tenebrous. Thus, the question that immediately arises is: is it realistic to think that any dental journal will be indexed in this new model? The quick answer is possibly one: Acta Odontológica Colombiana (Table 1).

Table 1. Current bibliometric status of Colombian dental journals.

Journal	ISSN (electronic)	Current	Indexed in Scopus o WoS	H5 of GS (2019 – 2023)	ICM (2019 – 2023)*
Revista Estomatología	2248-7220	Yes	No	3	0,6
Universitas Odontológica	2027-3444	Yes	No	7	1,4
Acta Odontológica Colombiana	2027-7822	Yes	No	11	2,2
Revista Facultad de Odontología Universidad de Antioquia	2145-7670	Yes	No	7	1,4
Revista Nacional de Odontología	2357-4607	Yes	No	6	1,2
Ustasalud	2590-7875	Yes	No	4	0,8
CES Odontología	2215-9185	No	No	NA	NA
Revista Odontos	--	No	No	NA	NA
Journal Odontológico Colegial	--	No	No	NA	NA
Revista Colombiana de Investigación en Odontología	--	No	No	NA	NA

*The calculation did not take into account the H5 factors of Scopus and CS because Publindex does not establish how this will be done. Source: own elaboration.

The rest of the journals do not seem to have a chance because none of them is in Scopus or WoS and they have an H5 below the threshold for category C ($H5 = 10$) of call 910 of 2021.⁵ Moreover, as the threshold tends to increase over the years, perhaps not even that journal will be indexed. Moreover, as the threshold tends to increase over the years, perhaps not even that journal will be indexed, even more so if one takes into account that the weighting of H5 of GS is half that given to CS and H5 of Scopus in the MCI.^{1,4} In fact, an MCI threshold as low as 3 would already leave out all dental journals according to the estimated calculations, without considering competition with other journals (Table 1).

In conclusion, it is truly difficult for a Colombian dental journal to be indexed in the new Publindex model, if it is approved as it is. As recommended in a previous work, it is urgent that these journals begin the process of indexing in Scopus or WoS in order to return massively to the national journal ecosystem,⁵ because for these the aphorism that Minciencias applies is "Scopus, WoS or perish."

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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None.

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