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# 50 years of the Journal of the National Faculty of Public Health. Old paradigms and new challenges

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Since the origin of scientific journals in the 17th century, they have had an essential mission: to serve as mediators between those who, after rigorous research, choose to share with the academic community both the results of their findings and the methodological experiences considered in each case. In this way, the universe of science is enriched every day by the contribution of many men and women committed ethically, socially, and politically to the progress of humanity, eventually constituting collectively the most important mark of life's growth in terms of scientific progress and knowledge. The old phrase "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants" can serve as a metaphor for appreciating the importance of scientific journals in the constant progress of science. This importance rests on two fundamental pillars: credibility and visibility. Without them, their mission could collapse.

When a study's credibility is called into question, its contribution to universal science is nullified. This lack of credibility would affect not only the authors but also the journal itself, which failed to meet the rigor required in the review process. This is reason enough for the editorial team to use the most rigorous tools for verifying the quality and suitability of the articles in service of their readers.

Regarding visibility, some authors, in pursuit of academic or even economic benefits, forget that an article is not written to receive benefits that may result from its publication but rather to communicate. The communicative function occurs in the encounter between the author and the reader, complemented later by citation and interconnection between scholars worldwide. Those searching through bibliographic databases are not seeking the journal, no matter how renowned it may be, but, rather, an article that is useful to them. Therefore, publishing is indispensable and finding readers is necessary. Thus, one must consider the aphorism attributed to Marshall McLuhan, one of the most prominent communication theorists of the 20th century: "What is not communicated, does not exist" [2].

Thanks to the technological developments in computer science, it can be said that the visibility of publications is now a universal reality both geographically and through data collectors. When journals surpassed the limitations imposed by paper as a physical resource (which was indispensable in the history of publications), there was a surge in the dissemination of articles to the extent that the bibliographic information included in repositories and databases can now be accessed from anywhere in the world via a computer or digital phone. However, something that at first glance appears to be an advantage also presents challenges.

\* Robert Burton, in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), quotes Didacus Stella, a Franciscan friar from the 16th century born in Navarre, who is first attributed with this famous phrase that accounts for the collective and cumulative value of science throughout history: "I say with Didacus Stella, 'A dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant may see farther than a giant himself'" [1].

ges for authors in ensuring that their articles can be found and read. UNESCO affirms that in 2022, over six million scientific articles were published worldwide [3], which, in layman's terms, turns each publication into a needle in a haystack. In this scenario, visibility must surpass the mere presence in databases to promote increasingly rigorous qualification and labeling tools and drive progress in bibliometric indicators that make their finding and consultation more feasible, leading to improved citation indicators.

For our part, the Journal of the National Faculty of Public Health, during its 50 years of continuous publication, aligns with these principles. Throughout its trajectory, there has been a constant progression in the quality and relevance of its contents, while also integrating the resources computer technology has made available to authors and editors. This trajectory, spanning almost a human generation, has experienced significant moments of progress, from its initial stages, where typewritten manuscripts, index cards on cardboard, and physical periodicals archives constituted the entirety of the available dissemination potential, to the arrival of computers, and, subsequently, the immense possibilities offered by circulation on the web. Nowadays, the journal is at the international forefront through its inclusion in important bibliographic databases worldwide.

Although this technological development is significant, it can also be understood that it is correlated with increased demands regarding the quality of articles and the requirements for peer reviewing and editing tasks. As the journal participates in more complex spaces, keeping high-quality standards is essential to maintaining its academic position, something that has indeed been done.

In the face of the fast emergence of algorithms known as "Artificial Intelligence" (AI), reflecting on the benefits and risks posed by their incorporation into bibliographic management is a great challenge. We should see these new advancements much like Roman mythology represented the god Janus, with two faces, one looking forward and one looking backward [4]. In other words, at the risk of getting lost inside the technological intricacies that come with a unilateral view of progress, we cannot lose sight of what has always been the foundational archetype of scientific journals, considering the universe of publications as the most significant mark that can be left on the progress of human knowledge. Human beings must never surrender before tasks that, in my opinion, are non-delegable in the progress of science: the capacity to ask questions, the struggle for the progress and well-being of humanity, the ethical commitment not only to science but also to the values inscribed within it; the defense of ideological paradigms; and, fundamentally, the conviction that humanity is the bearer of knowledge and intelligence. Similarly, we understand that the profound relationship between the researcher and their study population, especially when it involves human beings and other living creatures, implies an indispensable encounter with the world mediated by awareness and respect.

However brilliant the gleam of AI may be, it is merely a valuable tool at the service of humans, and its future could never be to replace us in guiding the world. It would be a catastrophic dystopia that perhaps only finds a place in fiction literature.

It is also not sensible to deny or renounce the benefits and possibilities offered by these new advancements. Considering the complexity and demands of some tasks associated with scientific publications, there can be gains in opportunity and quality by putting new algorithms at the service of publications. This is evident in tasks such as bibliography search and management, fast handling of complex data processing tasks, translation, and comparison with other available studies. Ultimately, researchers can dedicate more time to their essential mission, which is research, and delegate some publication tasks to machines [5].

As part of its role as a guarantor of the highest standards of quality in scientific publications, it is worth highlighting that the Journal of the National Faculty of Public Health has embraced and followed up on the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) regarding AI in publications [6]. Therefore, at the time of submission of the articles, authors must acknowledge whether they used AI-assisted technologies when creating their work. †

In a scenario like today's, where conflicting approaches intersect between proponents and opponents of everything that cybernetics ventures into, it may be prudent to promote reflections and debates around what humanism considers immutable regarding actions on the world. From a broad ethical agreement, we should establish limits to the advances of these sciences. These limits should apply to computer science, genetics, and behavioral sciences in defense of sustainable humanism.

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† By way of example, I inform my readers that I consulted Google Bard as a source of information regarding the bibliographic references [3] and [5].

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