



EDITORIAL

Wisdom and tenacity: Our inseparable companions on this long and hard road



Since having achieved an impact factor, the editorial committee of the RPP, in various editorials, has put forward a variety of suggestions as to strategies to increase the visibility and impact of the journal in an extremely demanding environment, essentially to be included in the most differentiated group of respiratory medicine journals.^{1–4} On the other hand in the last few years we have progressively achieved a growth in that Impact Factor, in the number of articles submitted, along with a greater diversity of provenance, as well as a significant increase in visits to our website and the number of published articles consulted.⁵ Without underestimating any of these developments, I feel that it is in the interest of all to keep working for this positive evolution. However, for this evolution to continue to be favourable we need a continuous scrutiny of the journal data as well as planning strategies which will allow this objective to be fulfilled. This reflection must be based on a real awareness of how the classification of a scientific journal works, so it is very important a careful reading of the editorial by Helena Donato in a previous edition of this journal.⁶

When we analyse the various data of the journal relating to last year, I do not think I would be exaggerating in my opinion that the current format of the journal, which has achieved the results referred to in the previous paragraph, is now burned out and would not allow us to keep up the favourable evolution we have had so far. There are signs that saturation point has been reached, the fact that the numbers mentioned of visits to the website and downloads of published articles are the same as those of the previous year unlike the significant growth that we had seen in the years before, in addition to not having been able to attract more visitors and articles from leading countries in respiratory research. On the other hand, there is a still greater difficulty recruiting international reviewers, adding to the evident exhaustion of the national reviewers who because of being constantly in demand are less motivated to do the work. I fear that these problems will persist if we do not succeed in giving the journal a more international bent, though keeping it as the representative body of the Portuguese Pulmonology Society. However, the fact that its name has an

appeal in the national context ends by restricting its potential in the context of the group of journals in which the RPP is positioned.

In relation to the reviewing process, the solution becomes more complex. It is really becoming urgent that there is a greater appreciation of the work involved in curricular review of articles, given that it is dependent on the good will of those who do this arduous task, without subsequent compensation. Given that potential reference reviewers of specific scientific topics are in demand for other scientific work, usually more rewarding in terms of curricula, added to the growing number of articles submitted to reviews, the probability of obtaining collaboration of reviewers who can contribute to the improved quality and rigour of articles is increasingly less likely. I fear that by keeping the situation as it is, the process of high quality and rigorous “peer review”, which underpins the publication of scientific articles may be endangered.

In conclusion, there are many points of reflection on which we need to focus in order to take the right decisions in relation to the future of the journal. Participation in key discussions about the journal, which is the duty of all members of the society, must have as a point of departure a concrete idea of what type of journal we really want and if we are agreed this journal is in the highly differentiated and competitive group of Impact Factor, there must be a clear idea of what this means, so that we can design the best strategies which will lead to greater visibility of the journal and consequently of the society and the respiratory research carried out in Portugal, objectives which I believe we can all adhere to.

References

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