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Editorial Decisions in Dermatology Journals: Is the Impact Factor a Double-Edged Sword?☆



Las decisiones editoriales en las revistas dermatológicas: ¿es el factor de impacto un arma de doble filo?

Among the many tools now available for evaluating the quality of scientific publications, journal impact factor (IF) remains the metric most widely used to reflect both quality and prestige. However, diverse variables can be adjusted to bring about a direct or indirect effect on a journal's authentic IF. For example, journals in clinical specialties like dermatology could seek to print articles that lean toward topics of more general medical interest in order to attract more citations, thereby improving their metrics. That decision, however, might undermine their mission to inform readers on more specialized and subspecialized topics, the ones that lead to a deeper and more exhaustive understanding of specific diseases.¹

This issue of *Actas Dermo-Sifiliográficas* contains an excellent study by Rodríguez-Lago et al² on some of the reasons behind editorial decisions. The authors explain why specialized journals place more importance on certain types of articles today. They also discuss how editorial boards must

think carefully about how to improve their IF while balancing that aim against any journal's need to keep readers' interest high by publishing genuinely new content.

In our formal medical training, we are called on to think critically in order to acquire depth of understanding of diseases. But we must also then go on to report our clinical experiences and research findings by publishing papers in the most respected journals. Bibliometric studies like that of Rodríguez-Lago et al² are necessary because they can help us plan strategies toward reaching our goal of placing our work in a high-IF journal.

References

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