

“Revista Medicina” in the electronic version: an important step towards a new era

Revista Medicina em forma eletrônica: passo importante para uma nova era

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In the early nineties it was already being predicted that electronic journals would be a reality as early as within the first years of the 21st century. This was indeed the case and increasing numbers of journals have discontinued their paper version to become popularized on the Internet.

Thus, the production and dissemination of scientific information has entered a new and revolutionary phase. The virtual environment or cyberspace has been rapidly occupied, turning the interaction between persons extremely instantaneous and democratic.

Once information was posted on the World Wide Web (WWW), it became possible to create a new reality for mankind, with the dreams of fiction or the beliefs of religion becoming plausible phenomena. This was the origin of cyberspace as a vast network with constant ramifications tending to infinity. Texts, sounds and images mingle in this ensemble of hypermediatic systems.

The shortening of the distance between investigators and the source of theoretical subsidies, the instantaneous nature of the flow of information, the possibility of interactive mediation of resources and of the manage-

ment of contents, and the facility in publishing the results make cyberspace a great instrument for the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

The access to remote information or the contact with a distant agent would involve an extremely longer time than that spent via the Internet. The availability of works or of the contents of international libraries online, as well as electronic correspondence by e-mail or virtual forums, drastically reduce the geographical gap and therefore the time of research, permitting the scientific community to advance by leaps and bounds (Born e Ribeiro, 2005).

Although the access to the Internet is not yet universal, it is already sufficient for the net to represent a medium for the full democratization of knowledge. In addition, the cybernetic technologies continue to develop in an allucinating rhythm, tending to reach an increasingly larger number of persons around the planet.

Printed publications are static and linear. In cyberspace, the data banks can be constantly updated. By electronic publication, papers are available at the national and international level. These electronic jour-

nals are used by the universities to support the dissemination of the results of scientific research, creating mechanisms for the legitimacy of the studies and for the stimulation of their publication (BORN e RIBEIRO, 2005).

Also, the cost of printed publications is high,

a fact that often impairs regular periodicity and jeopardizes the process of indexation in good data bases.

The electronic medium maintains the dynamic nature of a journal, a fact that stimulates the authors to publish in it (Fig. 1).

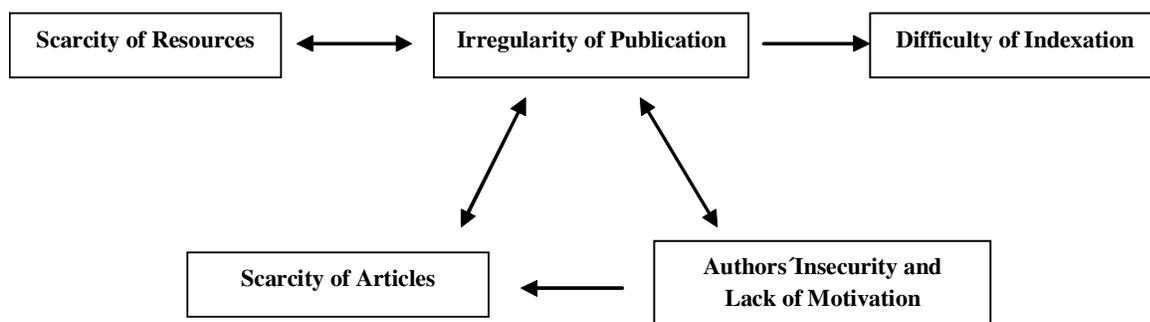


Fig. 1: Mechanisms causing irregular periodicity of Brazilian scientific journals.

On this basis, the “Revista Medicina” engages in this cybernetic process of publication, aiming at indexation by Scielo and at full publication in English on a medium-term basis by the end of the year 2011. We begin this process by publishing this editorial in English. Our scientific community, the University Hospital and our Faculty of Medicine of Ribeirão Preto-USP deserve this distinction.

References

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