

## Editorial 1

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### **Quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation of research. The beginning of changes in academia [Editorial]**

### **Evaluación cuantitativa y/o cualitativa de la investigación. Marejada académica [Editorial]**

Rough water is a sea state, common in the Mediterranean Sea, characterised by waves between sixty centimetres and one metre and twenty centimetres high, sustained, i.e. small but longer, including crests. Something is beginning to move for a change.

In the last [editorial](#) (Tur-Viñes, 2022) corresponding to the July issue (2023), we mentioned the data from Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR), a product derived from Scopus, which published the annual update of its journal indicators days before Scopus did the same. That editorial closed just in the period between the two public announcements, i.e., knowing the SJR data but not knowing the Scopus data. Once both data were available, the result is as follows: *Mediterranean Journal of Communication* / *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación* is indexed in [Scopus](#) (2022) (Q1, Cultural Studies; Q3, Communication; 2021), in [SJR](#) (Q2, Communication, 2021). Moreover, the journal is also indexed in [JCR/ESCI](#) (Clarivate, 2022) in Q3, Communication (JCI of 2021). In Scopus, the journal achieves a citeScore of 0.9, ranking 260/1127 in the *Cultural Studies* category (76th percentile) and 254/467 in *Communication* (45th percentile). This range of quartiles is particularly interesting.

All this is relative. The quartile difference between Scopus and its by-product Scimago Journal Ranking (SJR) is attributable to the type of source indicators. Scopus uses the citeScore (citation) and SJR uses Google PageRank (web authority and link quality of the journals contained in Scopus). It should be noted that ANECA (The Spanish National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation), in guideline G19 of the document entitled *Principles and guidelines for the updating of ANECA 2021 research evaluation criteria*, indicated that:

In the case of SCOPUS, SJR will be replaced by citeScore as the reference impact index. In the 2021 calls for *sexenios* (recognition of a six-year research period, which may or may not be consecutive) and during the first two years of application of this criterion (accreditation applications submitted up to 31 December 2023), both indicators may coexist, with the one most favourable to the researcher being applied. Subsequently, citeScore will be used exclusively (2021: 5).

The current Spanish evaluation system has placed the scientific article as a preferential merit in the evaluation of the six-year research period and in the accreditations to qualify for the different professorships. However, it is worth remembering that journals were created to disseminate research data, not to contribute, in such a decisive way, to the evaluation of the research activity of teaching staff. That is why, in 2012, a group of academic journal editors met during the American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB) Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California (USA) to propose the *San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)*. The text discussed the use of the impact factor as the main parameter in comparing the scientific output of individuals and institutions. The arguments against its use are as follows: citation distributions are highly biased; the impact factor considers a wide diversity of documents of different nature and responds to the specificity of each field; it is manageable; and its calculation is not transparent or accessible in all cases.

DORA recommends abandoning the use of journal-based metrics in faculty funding, appointment and promotion processes. Furthermore, it suggests that the impact factor should not replace the measurement of the intrinsic quality of articles.

Years before DORA, in 1999, the *Budapest Declaration* was signed at the World Conference on Science for the 21st Century: a new commitment, organised by UNESCO and the International Council for Science (ICSU). This international declaration promoted open access to scientific research articles on the internet.

The Leiden Manifesto (2015) emerged from the conference of the Centre for Science and Technology Studies at Leiden University (The Netherlands) in 2014. It defends the complementarity between quantitative and qualitative evaluation, stressing that under no circumstances can the former replace the latter.

In July 2022, the European University Association (EUA) participated, together with Science Europe and the European Commission, in the development of an *Agreement on Research Assessment Reform* to harmonise, at the European level, changes in research assessment practices, research staff and research-performing organisations, in order to maximise their quality and impact. In Spain, Crue Universidades Españolas (Association of Rectors of Spanish Universities) (Crue, 2022) is coordinating its implementation. This recent initiative proposes weighting quality and impact in the following way:

Focus research evaluation criteria on quality. Reward originality of ideas, research conduct and results beyond the state of the art. Reward the variety of research perspectives, from basic and frontier research to applied research. Quality implies that research is conducted through transparent research processes and methodologies, and through research management that allows for the systematic re-use of previous results. Openness of research and verifiable and reproducible results contribute greatly to quality. Openness corresponds to early sharing of knowledge and data, as well as open collaboration including the involvement of society, where appropriate. Evaluation should be based on qualitative judgement, for which peer review is essential, supported by quantitative indicators used in a responsible way (CoARA, 2022:3).

CoARA represents an important step in the improvement of assessment systems and appears to be a robust initiative endorsed by many university institutions. It is current because it takes into account aspects such as diversity, equal opportunities and inclusiveness. It opens the door to the personalisation of research careers, facilitating the projection of self-objectives that enable the future projection of researchers; it underlines the enormous value and importance of scientific review, proposing its express recognition; it vindicates the value of scientific productions other than articles and, above all, it represents an attempt to specify measures that will transform and improve the current system. The two proposed commitments stand out along these lines:

- Basing research evaluation mainly on qualitative evaluation, for which peer review is essential. The aim is to reverse the importance of both types of evaluation, prioritising qualitative evaluation and considering quantitative evaluation as complementary, according to each scientific context. To this end, focus is placed on the early exchange of data and results, collaboration, teamwork and the consideration of contributions to the research ecosystem, the generation of knowledge and the scientific, technological, economic, cultural and social impact.
- Abandon inappropriate uses in research evaluation of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of the Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and the h-index.
- Avoidance of the use of research organisation rankings in research evaluation. This commitment is intended to prevent the dissemination of inappropriate metrics used in international rankings of commercial companies outside the European reality, and to activate autonomy in shaping evaluation practices that aim for interoperability.

We would like to think that CoARA is a gateway to an improved system. The journals will continue to do what we know how to do: scientifically and rigorously review texts to share them with the scientific community, thus contributing to the broadening of knowledge.

We here present the first issue of 2023 with 29 texts. It includes 12 scientific articles in two special issues, 7 articles in the miscellaneous section, 3 editorials and 7 reviews. The first special issue is entitled **Audiences and new forms of broadcasting: linear, on demand, streaming and/or social** and has been coordinated by Jorge Gallardo-Camacho (Camilo José Cela University, Spain), César García (Central Washington University, USA) and Belén Puebla-Martínez (Rey Juan Carlos University, Spain). The second special issue focuses on **Television series as a multidisciplinary object of study** and has been coordinated by Jesús

Segarra-Saavedra (University of Alicante, Spain), Tatiana Hidalgo-Marí (University of Alicante, Spain) and Paul Julian Smith (Graduate Center, City University of New York, USA). Special mention should be made of the involvement and dedication of the coordinators of both special issues. Their work is essential to support the regular internal work of the journal. Thank you very much. I leave the introduction to the texts of the special issues to the editorials signed by the coordinators.

In the miscellaneous section, you can enjoy a selected compendium that reveals the prevalent themes in research in the field. **Content curation and its importance in journalism** is the topic proposed by Carlos Lopezosa, Javier Guallar, Lluís Codina and Mario Pérez-Montoro. Through an exploratory systematized review, the authors identify three essential motivations for the use of content curation in journalism: the existence of a large amount of raw data, unfiltered and without context, which generates noise and hinders its significance and relevance; the demand of audiences to acquire less content; and the current disorders of information, which explain, among others, disinformation and deception.

Twitter is the subject of research in the following two texts. The first focuses on Islamophobia and is written by Cristina Fuentes-Lara and Carlos Arcila-Calderón. Their article entitled **Islamophobic hate speech on social networks. An analysis of attitudes to Islamophobia on Twitter** it characterises three audience profiles on the subject (the ambivalent, the non-Islamophobic and the Islamophobic) by analysing more than 7,000 tweets. For their part, Jorge Tuñón-Navarro and Andrea Bouzas note an evolution in the communicative mechanisms of the political parties studied that activates both the participation and the interaction of their communities of followers, although the populist nature of the discourses is perceived to be maintained in the text entitled **European far right on Twitter. Analysis of the digital communication strategy of Vox and Lega during the 2014 and 2019 European elections**.

**The internationalisation of Spanish research in Communication through the Horizon 2020 Programme** is the interesting topic chosen by Inés Méndez-Majuelos, Francisco-J. Olivares-García and Aránzazu Román-San-Miguel. It reveals that researchers in Spain are starting to have a significant international presence, both in programmes aimed at the areas of Social Sciences and Humanities, as well as in others more oriented towards basic and applied science. It is observed that this participation is both in the coordination of proposals and in participation within teams or consortia.

Lucía Benítez-Eyzaguirre, Celia de-Marcos-Fernández and Lucía Acosta-Calderón share, in their text **Hyperconversation, the augmented dialogue of the mobile world** their reflections on the new conversation registered through WhatsApp. They provide evidence of the transformation of the structure of classical dialogue. The new dialogue in this chat takes place through different channels of interaction and often follows the same logic as the hypertext of free, everyday reading. It is much richer because the leaps of thought coincide; they are connected by association of ideas through content, comments, fragments of other dialogues, in multi-line sequences or often with an arborescent structure.

**Body satisfaction and screen media use in Spanish schoolchildren** is the focus of the research by J. Roberto Sánchez Reina, Mònika Jiménez-Morales and Mireia Montaña Blasco. The text provides greater knowledge on the relationship between screen consumption and children's body satisfaction, and can contribute to the design of more strategic and targeted media literacy interventions, especially among less explored populations such as children.

The last article in the miscellaneous section is international. It is entitled **Categories of Trust categories for television news and indicators for its measurement: perceptions of stakeholders in Germany, Spain and Italy**, and it is proposed by Mercedes Medina, Cristina Etayo Pérez and Javier Serrano-Puche. It offers a conceptual framework on the categories and indicators that serve to identify quality television journalism and tests the perceptions of different stakeholders in the media industry on the importance afforded to each of these elements. It proposes the creation of an audio-visual news trust mark (SCAI) as an external accreditation mechanism granted to media that promote good professional practices.

Enjoy all these contributions.

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