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letters to the Editor

Publishing challenges in the new decade

Dear Editor in Chief,

2020 is a very important year for the European Journal of Paediatric Dentistry: exactly 10 years ago the journal started to be indexed in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR). A great job was done since then by the chief editors, editors, editorial board and referees. Thanks to their joint effort, the journal impact factor peaked up steadily from 0.36 to 0.87 in 2018, stabilising the journal position in the fourth quartile. The EJPD has become a reference publication in paediatric dentistry literature and research. Moreover, it was the first Italian journal to appear in the "Dentistry, Oral Surgery & Medicine" category of JCR and an absolute pioneer in implementing the open access model in dental literature. This 10th anniversary is a time to celebrate past achievements and to reflect on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

According to the data published by Miralles et al. in 2019, 20.15% of articles published from 2010 to 2018 by the EJPD are related to orthodontics and occlusion. While for other journals in the paediatric dentistry field the percentage ranged from 2.14% to 9.6% [Miralles Garcia, 2019]. In 2009 only five journals related to orthodontics were present in the JCR, while today they have almost doubled in number.

A model in which orthodontics is so predominant is still sustainable at present?

According to the same data source, in the last decade EJPD published a high number of case reports, accounting for 19.4% of the published papers. On the contrary, other highly cited paediatric dentistry journals published only between 4.6% and 16.1% of case reports [Miralles Garcia, 2019]. A PubMed search, from January 2018 to present, highlighted that the EJPD published 19 case reports, while Pediatric Dentistry and the International Journal of Paediatric Dentistry published only 4 each. As a matter of fact, some journals as Orthodontic Craniofacial Research decided to no longer publish case reports. Taking into account that case reports are usually poorly cited [Warren, Borie, Kreger, Martin, & Boyd, 2020], can an adjustment in this editorial trend have a beneficial impact on the evolution of the impact factor of EJPD?

The way of interchanging information between researchers and scholars has changed dramatically in the last decades. With the arrival of Web 2.0, the so called "social web", scholars are not only able to cite an article, but also add it to their web pages, bookmark it, blog it, microblog it through Twitter, download it, share it or give it a five-star review [Huang, Wang, & Wu, 2018]. According to a recent survey about research tools usage, a large cohort of young post-doctoral researchers that are accustomed to social media and are willing to demonstrate promptly the impact of their research using those platforms exists [Garcovich, Ausina Marquez, & Adobes Martin, 2019].

What´s the online impact of the journal? And what can be done to get the EJPD ready for the social web?

We strongly believe that nobody is more dedicated than you to the success of this publication and probably you have already addressed those challenges. Nevertheless we suggest you consider a thoroughly bibliometric evaluation of the journal to face the future challenges with a global consideration of the past and present journal impact.

Sincerely,

Daniele Garcovich and Riccardo Aiuto***

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answer of the Editor

Publish (on social media)... or perish?

Dear Dr. Garcovich and Dr. Aiuto,

We truly appreciate your interest in European Journal of Paediatric Dentistry.

As you know, the aim and scope of the European Journal of Paediatric Dentistry has always been to promote research in all aspects of dentistry related to children, including interceptive orthodontics and studies on children and young adults with special needs.

I strongly believe that orthodontic subjects play a leading role in a paediatric journal. Malocclusion is considered the third priority for oral health disease according to the World Health Organization. An orthodontic problem can affect several oral functions such as chewing, swallowing and speaking [Mohd Toseef Khan et al., 2013] and we also know that malocclusion in primary dentition represents a relevant risk factor for further occlusal disorders related to either mixed and permanent dentitions [Stahl et al., 2008]. According to a recent study [Lombardo et al., 2020], malocclusion reaches the highest worldwide prevalence (54%) since early childhood, during the deciduous dentition period, and keeps unvaried this standard up to permanent dentition (54%). Relying on these prevalence data, malocclusions represent a relevant oral health problem as well as an economic burden for either the families of affected children or dental health public services. Nowadays, health care is stronger and paediatric dentistry should be carried out by a team able to deal adequately with children's health in every field, from prevention to illness, from the birth to the growth.

Our editorial choice of publishing also case reports is explained by the fact that EJPD wishes to engage also younger paediatric dentists. These scientifically-based reports can serve as a clinical guide and a good growth point for their clinical activity. The research alone might be, in some cases, too distant from everyday practice. In addition, young colleagues motivated by clinical needs, though close to the university doctrine, request the "paradigm of scientific knowledge", that starts from university doctrine, to get into clinical practice. The appropriate balance between the two should however be considered. One solution would be to apply more restrictive criteria to case reports and request to scientific researchers to add a clinical illustration of their studies.

Regarding the online impact of EJPD, the web domain, as a means of communication of scientific research, has resulted in a new form of production, circulation and evaluation of research results. While the impact factor is the indicator that evaluates the scientific output and the attention that a journal draws, today we must also consider the social impact of the journal on the public. Although investing in a web presence can promote increased public exposure of the journal, the research in the field shows that impact factor is not affected by it.

SIOI (Italian Society of Paediatric Dentistry) is currently working on this topic, producing scientific contents free of charge available online in a "digital language" for the social media audience, whether practitioners or patients.

I shall conclude by saying that the scientific editorial board will keep up with social technology, respecting the "old and strict rules" of scientific publishing. EJPD is doing this.

Respectfully,

Luigi Paglia, Editor in chief
Sara Colombo, Assistant editor
Matteo Beretta, Assistant editor

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