

## Social networks and scientific rigor: A new battle on the horizon?



### Redes sociales y rigor científico: ¿una nueva batalla en el horizonte?

The divulgation of scientific research is essential. Peer review by medical journals has become the gold standard in recent decades for ensuring the quality and adequacy of the articles that are published. This process involves the independent and critical evaluation of an article by expert peers.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, the impact factor (IF) has been a measure of the importance of a scientific journal, based on the citations received by the articles it publishes. The IF is a tool used to compare journals and assess the relative importance of a given journal with respect to others within the same scientific field. Specifically, the IF of a journal measures the mean number of times the articles published in it have been cited in the course of a given year.<sup>2</sup> However, entry into

different social networks (SNs) has been made as part of the strategic objectives of many scientific publications. The reason behind this is fundamented on a novel reality: the new role of scientific interactivity in the biomedical field, the influence of the visibility of a journal on the web in order to increase its IF, and the advantages afforded for promoting the internationalization of the publication.<sup>3</sup>

However, scientific rigor - as measured by the IF of a journal - and repercussion in the SNs (taking Twitter® as an example), do not seem to match very well (Table 1).

Obviating (perhaps needlessly so) payment for publication, do we seek rigor? Divulgation? The combination of both, if possible...?

In the case of researchers, a preference is observed for choosing scientific journals where the editorial product forms part of virtual communities. In other words, SNs represent an important window for divulgation among academics and diffusion between specialists and their audiences.<sup>4</sup>

But we must be careful when “clicking” on “re-send” and “likes”: the technique used by Goebbels as head of

**Table 1** The main journals in Intensive Care Medicine, ordered by impact factor in 2021, Twitter® account, and number of followers updated on 5 January 2023.

Journal	Impact factor 2021	Twitter account	Followers (January 2023)
<i>Lancet Respir Med</i>	102.6	@LancetRespirMed	23.7 thousand
<i>Intensive Care Med</i>	41.8	@yourICM	55.3 thousand
<i>Am J Respir Crit Care</i>	30.5	@ATSBlueEditor	16.7 thousand
<i>Crit Care</i>	19.3	@crit_care	50.2 thousand
<i>Ann Intensive Care</i>	10.3	@of_aic	1827
<i>Chest</i>	10.3	@accpchest	40 thousand
<i>Crit Care Med</i>	9.3	@CritCareMed	47.1 thousand
<i>J Intensive Care</i>	7.5		
<i>Anaesth Crit Care Pain Med</i>	7.0	@AnesthCritCare	14.1 thousand
<i>Resuscitation</i>	6.3	@ResusJournal	3194
<i>Crit Care Resusc</i>	5.7	@CCRJournal	606
<i>J Neurotraum</i>	4.9	@J Neurotrauma	558
<i>J Crit Care</i>	4.3		
<i>Pediatr Crit Care Med</i>	4.0	@PedCritCareMed	14.6 thousand
<i>Semin Resp Crit Care</i>	3.9		
<i>Crit Care Clin</i>	3.9	@CritCareClinics	5963
<i>J Trauma Acute Care Surg</i>	3.7	@JTraumAcuteSurg	22.4 thousand
<i>Shock</i>	3.5	@ShockJournal	783
<i>Neurocrit Care</i>	3.5	@NeurocritCareJ	6162
<i>Minerva Anesthesiol</i>	3.4		
<i>Curr Opin Crit Care</i>	3.4		
<i>Aust Crit Care</i>	3.3	@AUS_CC	2537
<i>J Cardiothor Vasc Anesth</i>	2.9	@JCVOnline	7025
<i>J Intensive Care Med</i>	2.9		
<i>Med Intensiva</i>	2.8	@intensiva_med	3806
<i>Injury</i>	2.7		
<i>Burns</i>	2.6	@BurnJournalClub	1033
<i>Resp Care</i>	2.3	@respcare	12.5 thousand
<i>Am J Crit Care</i>	2.2	@ajccme	5836
<i>Crit Care Nurse</i>	2.2	@CCNme	2955
<i>J Burn Care Res</i>	1.8		
<i>Anaesth Intensive Care</i>	1.5	@AlCjournal	-
<i>Ther Hypot Temp Manage</i>	1.4		
<i>J Trauma Nurs</i>	0.9	@IJOTN	204
<i>Anasth Intensive Notf Anesthes</i>	0.7		
<i>Anasth Intensive Med</i>	0.6		

propaganda of the Nazi Party and later of the Third Reich can be summarized in a single phrase attributed to him: "A lie, if repeated a thousand times, becomes the truth..."<sup>5</sup>

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## Conflict of interest

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