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EDITORIAL

THE REAL IMPACT FACTOR OF JOURNAL OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE (JRM) AND JRM CLINICAL COMMUNICATIONS (JRM-CC)

Impact is defined as: "the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another" or "a marked effect or influence".

In scientific research, the impact of a journal is operationalized as the number of citations received during one year by articles previously published in the journal divided by the total number of articles published. The most commonly used indicators are the 2-year Impact Factor (IF) and the 5-year IF. Accordingly, the 2-year IF in 2018 for *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* (JRM) is the number of citations in 2018 (in all journals) to papers published in JRM during 2016 and 2017 divided by the total number of papers published in JRM during 2016 and 2017.

The current 2- and 5-year IFs for JRM are 1.802 and 2.202, respectively. We expect the IFs to increase for 2018. In the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) ranking JRM currently ranks number 29 for the 2-year IF and 23 for the 5-year IF. For clinical journals, the 5-year IF is generally considered more appropriate, because clinical research has a slower turnover than more fundamental research. The highest numbers of citations generated by JRM papers occur in the third and fourth year after publication. As such, the 2-year IF underestimates the scientific impact of papers published in most general rehabilitation journals.

Another prestigious ranking is published by Scimago (https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php). They use a 3-year period for papers to be cited in the year following this 3-year period. In addition, there are differences in what weight to give to Systematic Reviews, Letters to the Editor, Editorials, etc. The position of JRM in Scimago is more than satisfactory (Table I).

Many universities, hospitals, funding agencies and individual researchers consider the IF to be the main criterion to indicate the "quality" of journals or of authors. Publications in so-called "high-impact journals" are essential for researchers to make a career and to obtain funding for future projects. Although many authorities have criticized the use of the IF as the main criterion for quality it is still used worldwide.

Table I. Scimago's ranking list

Rank	Title	SJR	H index	Cites/ Doc. (2 years)
1	Human Reproduction	2.643	200	5.02
2	Neurorehabilitation and Neural Repair	2.265	87	4.98
3	Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation	1.545	85	2.99
4	Journal of NeuroEngineering and Rehabilitation	1.515	68	4.4
5	Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	1.501	162	2.97
6	African Journal of Disability	1.463	4	5.33
7	Clinical Rehabilitation	1.322	92	2.91
8	Journal of Special Education	1.229	59	2.05
9	Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy	1.227	40	3.4
10	Gait and Posture	1.188	123	2.47
11	Journal of Biomechanics	1.147	170	2.5
12	**Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine**	0.997	84	1.85
13	Journal of Intellectual Disability Research	0.981	89	1.94
14	BMC Sports Science, Medicine and Rehabilitation	0.926	13	4.84
15	AAC: Augmentative and Alternative Communication	0.919	43	2.46
16	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	0.880	61	1.88
17	Journal of Aging and Physical Activity	0.874	49	1.97
18	Geriatric Orthopaedic Surgery and Rehabilitation	0.832	13	1.7
19	Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention	0.816	61	1.69
20	Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal	0.802	56	1.97
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122	Rehabilitation Psicosocial	0.101	2	0.07

SJR: Scimago Journal Rank; H-Index: an author level metric attempting to measure both the productivity and citation impact of the publications.

Table II. The 10 most cited and most downloaded articles published in the Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine (JRM) in 2017

Reference	Times cited *n*	Downloads *n*
10 most cited articles		
Zhu et al. (1)	15	
Ertzgaard et al. (2)	8	
Lytsy et al. (3)	8	
Chiou et al. (4)	7	
Palm et al. (5)	6	
Sklempe Kokic et al. (6)	6	
Khan et al. (7)	6	
Mueller et al. (8)	5	
Prodinger et al. (9)	5	
Punt et al. (10)	5	
10 most downloaded articles		
Huang et al. (11)		6.552
Sklempe Kokic et al. (6)		4.516
Apeldoorn et al. (12)		4.002
Nonnekes et al. (13)		3.654
Lykke Knak et al. (14)		2.727
Peer et al. (15)		2.661
Dall'Acqua et al. (16)		2.362
McConnell et al. (17)		2.086
Ertzgaard et al. (2)		1.937
Bartolo et al. (18)		1.791

Bold: These references appear in the top 10 of both cited as well as downloaded articles.

An important question is whether the rankings of IF by JCR or Scimago actually reflect the "marked effect or influence" of papers published in JRM. The Editors-in-Chief of JRM consider the IF as an inevitable indicator, not least for the scientific quality of the article. The fact that other scientists cite a study is of importance mainly for other researchers and not for the readers of a scientific journal, such as clinicians, patients, government, journalists, etc. However, for these readers, IFs do not adequately cover the concept of impact.

We are therefore very excited that JRM has around 600 downloads per day. Apparently people worldwide want to read our publications and apply the results in their daily work or daily life (Table II). The more than 200,000 downloads per year reflect the "real impact factor" (RIF) of JRM and JRM-CC. The decision to become completely and immediately Open Access has certainly contributed immensely to this success.

In contrast to most other journals, it is free of charge to read and download JRM articles. Our Lay Abstracts make studies more understandable for readers without a medical or scientific background. The RIF will also strengthen areas of clinical importance that have few researchers.

The Editors-in-Chief and Associate Editors promise to continue to take all necessary steps to strengthen and improve the real impact of JRM, both for our authors and for our readers.

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