

## Editorial

In August 2015, CAPES, the official governmental agency that supervises the Brazilian graduation programs performed a migration of its database to a new system called Sucupira.

During this migration, hundreds of journals were "lost". They could not be found in the new system, and therefore, any Brazilian researcher who submitted to them would not receive points for the annual graduation evaluation performed by CAPES.

Many editors (including myself) started putting pressure on CAPES, but its only reaction was to release an official statement that the problems would be corrected by April, 2016.

As far as I know, no one decided to sue or ask for an official intervention in CAPES. In our case, financial issues, allied with the fact that the process would have to be filed in Brasília, more than 1000km from our home town (Macaé), made us give up this notion.

Hence, life continued as if nothing had happened. From April on, we made several inquiries with CAPES asking about the database correction, but the answer was always the same ("it's coming soon").

Finally, this December, the database was corrected. We came back to it, at the same level we were in 2012. So now, you can find us in the Sucupira database, at the B5 level<sup>1</sup>.

This is not a fair evaluation, from our point of view, because more than half of our full papers are cited, and about 10% of them gets cited more than 5 times. Nevertheless, this is not the major topic of this editorial.

The real problem we faced during these long months was the fact that submissions to our journal fell by about 70%, a fact that could have cost us our existence.

This decrease can be easily attributed to the fact that the authors did not find us in the journals database and, therefore, decided to submit to other journals that would satisfy the requirements imposed by either their departments or CAPES itself.

This is not a guess, but a hard fact that was confirmed by two prospective authors who, in personal communications, informed me that they could not risk submitting to our journal because their PhD program had a requirement of "qualified" publication and given that we were outside of the QUALIS database, they would not be allowed to present their thesis with a publication in our journal.

I do not blame the authors. They are playing a game (in the game theory sense) the rules of which are defined by a different party. I could also spend a lot of time blaming CAPES to no avail, because they were not moved by our complaints then, and would continue not to be so now.

The real issue here is how to evaluate a journal. The current system does not work in a reasonable manner, both because of bureaucratic tardiness and because of the fact that the graduate programs decide where to submit and this decision causes an impact on the database itself (CAPES only includes journals which received papers from some graduate programs in the last 12 months, which makes the system susceptible to manipulation from interested parties).

With today's sophisticated tools for and burgeoning literature on automated bibliometrics, using crawlers and robots, and generating all relevant statistics (such as citations, impact factors, eigenfactors etc.), it is hard to understand or justify the decision by CAPES to create and perpetuate an ad hoc metric of its own (QUALIS), which, being updated manually, is not even able to keep pace with the relatively modest rates of new data input.

We need the QUALIS system to come to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Otherwise, it will only be a hindrance to the progress of Brazilian science.

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