

## Salud Colectiva: report on editorial management 2011-2012

### Salud Colectiva: informe de gestión editorial 2011-2012

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In late 2010, we decided to start publishing data and indicators regarding the editorial work of *Salud Colectiva* (1) for the purpose of sharing this information with all actors involved in the journal. In this report we present a selection of data produced by the evaluation module of our editorial structure, detailing the monitoring of the review process of all submitted articles as well as the publication process of approved articles. We also include bibliometric and usage indicators, report the scores assigned to the journal by the evaluation systems of Brazil, Spain, and Colombia, and provide a synthesis of new developments that have taken place over the past two years.

#### EVALUATION MODULE

In 2011, we received 93 contributions written by 198 authors, while in 2012 the number of contributions was 120, involving 313 authors (Figure 1). There was a 44% increase in the number of articles received from 2011 to 2012, and the average number of authors per article rose from 2.2 to 2.6. This variation shows both a slight increase in the number of co-authored contributions and in the number of authors per article.

Regarding the geographical distribution of authors who submitted work (a), in 2011, the main countries represented were Mexico, Argentina,



Figure 1. Relation between the total number of articles submitted and the total number of authors involved.

Source: *Salud Colectiva*.

Spain, and Chile; whereas in 2012, there was an increase in the number of submissions from Brazilian and Colombian authors (Figure 2). As will be discussed later, we believe that this increase can be linked to the classifications assigned to *Salud Colectiva* by the evaluation systems of these two countries.

While there has been some variation in the number of authors affiliated with Argentine institutions (Figure 2), in the past three years the rate has remained close to 30% on average. Although this information is complex and susceptible to multiple interpretations, this demonstrates the distinctive regional character the journal has had from its beginnings, among other things.

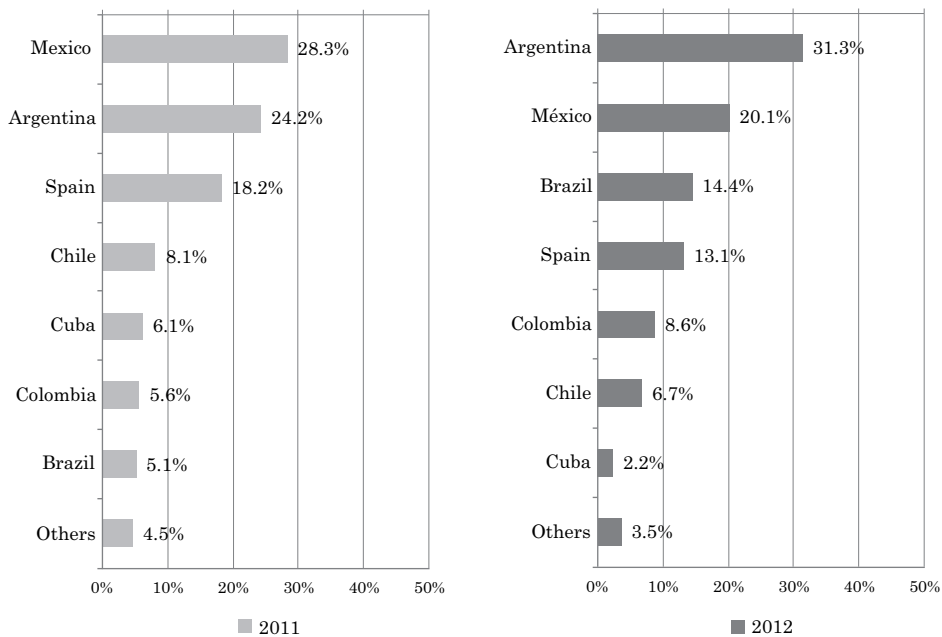


Figure 2. Percentage distribution of the total number of authors submitting articles in 2011 and in 2012, according to the country of their institutional affiliation.

Source: Salud Colectiva.

Of the total number of contributions received, 89% in 2011 and 90% in 2012 were spontaneously submitted to sections open to unsolicited submissions. Only 11% and 10%, respectively, were solicited contributions (editorials) or contributions written by journal staff for other sections. All unsolicited contributions underwent a pre-evaluation, not only to determine whether the articles were consistent with the goals and editorial policies of the journal, but also to unify criteria among authors regarding the meaning and scope of certain practices and conceptions related to the publication of research results.

One of the issues evaluated in this stage was whether the requirement of the submission of original and unpublished work had been met. During pre-evaluation in 2011, 16 articles submitted to *Salud Colectiva* were rejected because at the time of submission they had already been published by another online or printed academic journal, or published full-text on the websites of conferences, symposiums, or workshops. As mentioned in the "Guidelines for Authors" (2), the main reasons that *Salud Colectiva* prioritizes original and unpublished work are as follows:

- In the field of the health sciences, the evaluation process for submitted work continues to be based on the principles of confidentiality and anonymity of authors and evaluators (3,4). If the work is found online, either in full or in part, the condition of confidentiality in the evaluation process is compromised.
- Furthermore, work found online can be referenced and cited by other researchers, meaning that if it were to be published again this information would be duplicated (5,6).
- We believe that complying with the condition of unpublished work is essential to the efficient use of resources, therefore avoiding the unnecessary duplication of contents that can already be accessed by other means (5).

After specifying the criteria both in the "Guidelines for Authors" and in our newsletters in 2012, only 5 articles were rejected on the grounds of previous publication. Compared to previous years, this decrease meant that successful communication with potential authors was established. Therefore, we feel that the current scope of the concept of unpublished work, redundant publication, and the segmentation of results should

be discussed in editorial boards and within post-graduate academic institutions.

All articles accepted after the pre-evaluation stage were externally peer-reviewed by at least two reviewers per article. As mentioned in the previous report (1), reviewers work *ad honorem*, therefore acknowledging their contribution is an expression of our gratitude and recognition for the time they devote to this task, for meeting deadlines and for providing their invaluable feedback, which is also highly appreciated by the authors. Thus, we have posted a list of all reviewers that have collaborated in this process over the years on the institutional website of *Salud Colectiva*, available through the website of the Universidad Nacional de Lanús (7).

After the different stages of evaluation, 32.2% of articles were accepted in 2011 and 33% in 2012. Figure 3 shows the number of articles received versus those accepted over the past five years.

## PUBLICATION MODULE

In 2011, 32 contributions (b) were published, 78% of which were unsolicited articles submitted to open sections; the remaining percentage corresponded to editorials, debates, re-editions of historical documents, and *Salud Colectiva* productions for the "Dialogues" and "Memory and History" sections. Eighty-one authors contributed to the 32 published articles, 30% belonging to Argentine institutions and 70% to foreign institutions. Spain (26%) and Brazil (15%) were the most significant foreign contributors.

In 2012, 33 contributions were published, 76% of which were unsolicited articles, with the participation of 81 authors, 70% from Argentine institutions, reversing the trend of the previous year.

The average time elapsed from article submission to publication was 150 days for articles received in 2011 and 152 days for those received in 2012. This shows a decrease with respect to the average delay of 195 days in 2010. This figure is significant in that it demonstrates how the organization of the work of editorial production helps coordinate and expedite processes and reduce time so as to respect and prioritize the authors' needs to publish the results of their research.

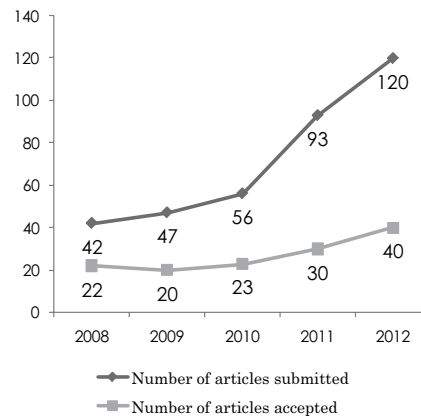


Figure 3. Number of articles submitted and number of articles accepted, 2008-2012.

Source: *Salud Colectiva*.

## BIBLIOMETRIC INDICATORS

Table 1 shows the main bibliometric indicators for the journal over the past four years based on the data published by the only three databases providing such indicators worldwide. In early 2009, the first evaluations were made by Journal Citations Reports and Scopus. Although the journal was indexed in the SciELO Argentina database in 2011, this electronic library produces indicators retrospectively, since SciELO collections include all journal contents from their first issue.

It is necessary to provide adequate context in order to analyze these indicators; that is, to consider the relative weight of these values within the overall scenario in which the journal is inscribed. Based on total number of citations, *Salud Colectiva* ranked fourth in all fields of knowledge and first in health sciences out of a total of 102 academic journals in SciELO Argentina (17). In Scopus (Netherlands), based on total number of citations, *Salud Colectiva* ranked sixth in all fields of knowledge (18) and second in health sciences out of the 41 Argentine academic journals included in this collection. In Journal Citation Reports (Thomson Reuters), 15 Argentine publications are represented in the *Sciences Edition* and only 5 journals in the *Social Sciences Edition*, among which *Salud Colectiva* ranked fourth based on

Table 1. Bibliometric Indicators for Salud Colectiva. 2009-2012.

Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>SciELO Argentina</b>				
Impact Factor <sup>1</sup>	0.2895	0.3333	0.2683	0.2826
Immediacy Index <sup>2</sup>	0.0952	0.1000	0.6923	0.3462
Half Life <sup>3</sup>	2.67	3.72	2.61	4.40
<b>Scopus</b>				
SCImagoJournal Rank (SJR) <sup>4</sup>	0.143	0.143	0.213	-
h-index <sup>5</sup>	3	3	3	-
Source-normalized impact per paper (SNIP) <sup>6</sup>	0.193	0.081	0.687	-
<b>Journal Citation Reports</b>				
Impact Factor <sup>1</sup>	0.324	0.316	0.211	0.209
Immediacy Index <sup>2</sup>	0.095	0.059	1.231	0.615
<b>Google Scholar Metrics</b>				
h5-index <sup>7</sup>	-	-	-	9
h5-median	-	-	-	14

Source: Own elaboration based on data published by Thomson Reuters (8), Elsevier (9,10), SciELO Argentina (11) and Google Scholar Metrics for Publications (12).

Note: Scopus is updated annually in October (10); therefore, the results for the year 2012 have not been published yet.

<sup>1</sup>The impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which articles in a journal have been cited on average in a particular year. The impact factor of a journal is calculated by dividing the number of citations in a given year by the total number of articles published in that journal during the previous two years (13,14).

<sup>2</sup>The Immediacy Index indicates the speed and frequency with which an average article issued by a specific journal is cited. The Immediacy Index is calculated by dividing the number of citations of articles published in a given year by the number of articles published in that year (13).

<sup>3</sup>Half life is calculated using the number of years from the current year to the year prior to that in which 50% of all of citations received was reached. This indicator is useful for showing article obsolescence (15).

<sup>4</sup>SCImagoJournal Rank is calculated by dividing the weighted citations received by a journal in a given year by the total number of documents published in the selected journal over the three previous years (16).

<sup>5</sup>H-index ranks published articles in a given year according to the number of citations of each article, so as to determine the first article whose order in the ranking is equal to or less than the number of citations (9,15).

<sup>6</sup>Source-normalized impact per paper weighs citations based on current citation patterns in a given field. The impact of a single citation is given higher value in subject areas where citations are less likely (10).

<sup>7</sup>H5-index is the h-index considering all the articles published over the past five years (2007-2011) (12).

total number of citations (8). In all of these databases, the variations in rankings of *Salud Colectiva* show, among other things, the close relation between this indicator and the universe of journals that it is based on.

It is worth mentioning that, in April 2012, Google Inc. launched *Google Scholar Metrics for Publications* (20), which generates two bibliometric indicators (h5-index and h5-median) for journals with articles indexed in Google Scholar. The figures released in 2012 corresponded to citations received between 2007 and 2011.

Although this section is included for informative purposes, we would also like to express our support for the *San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment* (DORA) initiative, signed by 8,667 researchers and 344 institutions to date (21). The declaration ratifies a widely debated critique of citation indicators in general, and in particular of the Impact Factor calculated by the Thomson Reuters Company, as not reflecting the quality of articles or journals. Therefore, these factors should not be considered by institutions evaluating productivity nor by funding agencies as indicative of the quality of scientific production.

## USAGE INDICATORS

In 2012 alone a total of 314,940 articles published in *Salud Colectiva* were downloaded from SciELO Argentina, SciELO Public Health, and Redalyc electronic libraries and from the institutional website of the Universidad Nacional de Lanús. Figure 4 shows the distribution of the total number of articles downloaded per month from these four Internet portals. As can be seen, 79% of the articles were downloaded from SciELO (Argentina and Public Health), showing the relevance of this online library as a space for the promotion of Latin American scientific production.

Since *Salud Colectiva* is currently indexed in more than 15 databases, these figures represent a portion of an unknown total of articles accessed online. However, this information provides a notion of the visibility provided by the projects based on open access policies.

## EVALUATION SYSTEMS

*Salud Colectiva* has been included in the evaluation systems of Brazil, Spain, and Colombia. These three countries have undertaken the task of establishing unified evaluation systems for academic journals. With this purpose in mind, they have developed new criteria to classify journals in which their researchers publish work. These systems are distinctive in that their criteria are

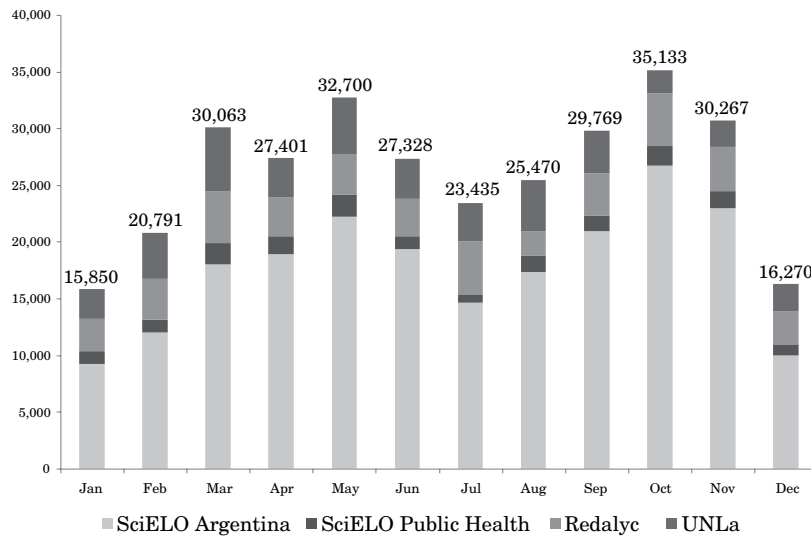


Figure 4. Number of downloaded Salud Colectiva articles per month in SciELO Argentina, SciELO Public Health, Redalyc, and Universidad Nacional de Lanús.

Source: Own elaboration based on data provided by SciELO Argentina, SciELO Public Health, Redalyc, and Universidad Nacional de Lanús, 2013.

Note: Total number of downloaded articles in 2012 = 314,940.

public and available online. From its beginnings, *Salud Colectiva* has published a large number of authors from these three countries, which has enabled the journal to be indexed and assessed by their evaluation systems.

In Brazil, the *Qualis* system (22) is composed of a set of procedures used to rank the quality of research produced by postgraduate centers. Based on the adopted criteria, each of the 49 fields of knowledge assesses and classifies publications into to eight categories: A1 (the highest category), A2, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, and C. *Salud Colectiva* has been classified by seven areas and in four of them (collective health, interdisciplinary, nursing, and social work) has received a B1 ranking.

Spain has developed the Integrated Classification for Scientific Journals (CIRC) [*Clasificación Integrada de Revistas Científicas*] (23,24). Five categories were established: Group A, Group B, Group C, Group D, and Group of Excellence. *Salud Colectiva* was ranked in Group A, made up of “the most prestigious international journals that have undergone demanding assessment

procedures in order to be indexed in a diversity of databases” (25).

In Colombia, the National System of Indexation and Homologation of Specialized Journals of CT+I [*Sistema Nacional de Indexación y Homologación de Revistas Especializadas de CT+I*] (26) ranks journals in four categories (A1, A2, B, and C) and *Salud Colectiva* was placed in the A1 category.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS, 2011-2012

### Publications

*Salud Colectiva* (English Edition) has just published its second and third online issues, thus completing the translation into English of Volume 7 (27,28). Subsequent issues are currently being translated, edited and published. The idea to create an English edition of *Salud Colectiva* was not grounded in the social mandate that asserts that “English is the language of science,” but rather the idea of providing an editorial

framework for critical thought in Spanish with a strong presence of Ibero-American authors, such that the expanded distribution of *Salud Colectiva* could open up new scenarios and perspectives for the authors. Thus, the English Edition enables us to reach a wider readership, not necessarily from English-speaking countries, and to open discussions to include other regions that face similar social problems.

This continuity is made possible due to the coordinated effort of a large number of people. We therefore wish to acknowledge and thank the entire UNLa Undergraduate Program in Sworn Translation Studies (English-Spanish), headed by Claudia Bértolo: the students who translated the articles in this volume, Daniela Amenta, Diego Bray, Analía Carballo, Adriana Coca, Nadia Couselo, Irene Jiménez, Laura Jiménez, Lisa Pagotto, Bárbara Riccardi, Daniela Saccone, Daniela Segura, María Rosa Tosi, Lucas Traba, Victoria Vallejos, Patricia Velázquez, and Micaela Vera; the program's instructors, María Victoria Illas, Mariela Santoro, and Pamela Vietri; the Office of Web Content, Marcela Repossi, Darío Tozzini, and Javier Bernal; as well as UNLa authorities and potential readers, the final recipients of this joint effort.

In October 2011, we published our first supplement (29) at the request of the Universidad de Alicante's Virtual International Center on Nutrition Research [*Centro Internacional Virtual de Investigación en Nutrición*], funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation Development [*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo*]. The supplement focused on different aspects of the implementation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the field of health. In 2012, we published a supplement on Neglected Diseases (30), which included an interesting debate on Juan Pablo Zabala's article "The disease in its labyrinth: advances, challenges and paradoxes over 100 years of Chagas in Argentina."

## INDEXING SERVICES

In 2011, *Salud Colectiva* was indexed in SciELO Public Health, a thematic collection of the SciELO electronic library that includes 15 journals

within the field published in Brazil, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, Italy, Spain, and the US. With the inclusion of *Salud Colectiva* in the SciELO database, Argentina came to be represented within the collection.

In late 2011, we submitted an application to be indexed by Medline. In November 2012, *Salud Colectiva* was accepted by the Selection Committee of the National Library of Medicine. As a result, Argentina now has nine academic journals indexed in this database (31). The contents of the two most recently published issues of *Salud Colectiva* are available through the PubMed platform.

## SYNTHESIS

As shown in this report, over the course of the past two years, *Salud Colectiva* has been able to insert itself into the arena of Ibero-American academic production and to move towards one of its main goals: reaching the greatest dissemination possible of the work of our authors, by increasing the visibility and impact of all published contents. However, a long process of consolidation still remains.

We believe that the objective of any academic journal goes beyond simply "publishing" articles. The publication stage marks the end of a process as well as the beginning of a more difficult challenge: on one hand, building dialogue with all the intermediaries who make content available to potential readers; and on the other, promoting and supporting communication between authors and readers. Both aspects are crucial to enabling us to continue to strengthen and value Latin American academic production and editorial practices.

## ENDNOTES

a. In both the classification and publishing modules, we were interested in visualizing the geographical origin of the institutional affiliations of all authors participating in the articles and not just of the corresponding author.

b. Contributions published in 2011 were not necessarily received and evaluated in 2011 since some articles were submitted in 2010 but approved for publication the following year.

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