



Research as a means of continuing education and personal evolution

La investigación como medio de formación continua y evolución personal

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If you have an apple and I have an apple, and we exchange apples then you and I will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas.

Charles F. Brannan

The medical profession allows us, unlike other areas, to combine the exercise of scientific and technical work.

While directly applying our knowledge for the benefit of our patients' health, we accumulate knowledge, experience, repeat what works, interrupt what seems not to be adequate. All this through a critical sense, which requires organization to analyze the data objectively and independently from our personal beliefs.

At this moment, several possibilities are presented, which include only giving an account of our experiences through retrospective studies, comparing our results with those of other colleagues, through comparative studies or meta-analyses, or daring more and planning prospective studies, testing or rejecting hypotheses and concepts. This last option consumes time and money, and often leads to results below what is expected from the point of view of scientific contribution, but certainly leads to personal and professional evolution.

The increasingly difficult market for scientific publications is flooded with professional writers, artificial intelligences, journals that charge fees that are unfeasible for the reality of many, and automated review systems that do not allow improvements to submitted manuscripts. What may seem like an obstacle, appears as a new opportunity for evolution in our medical and personal careers, in which not giving up on a publication, maintaining a routine of schedules for scientific work, allows the doctor who does not have a professional structure or traditional support, to evolve in his study and consequently in his knowledge about the area for the benefit of his patients.

In the last 20 years I have dedicated myself to understanding scientific research as part of the training of my students, and certainly several ideas have been lost due to lack of planning and execution, but mainly because I did not

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persist in improving the concept of the study and its publication. Our current model involves weekly, hour-long research meetings and assignment distribution for the following week. Working as a team, delegating functions and documenting the steps of a research project proved to be effective ways to maintain constant scientific production, passing on learning to the younger ones and minimizing errors in the planning and execution of our ideas.

Writing about our work is analyzing, criticizing, seeking solutions and especially sharing ideas with our community, with no other purpose than the improvement of our profession. Having a scientific paper rejected is not a failure, but an opportunity for reflection, repetition, and improvement of our skills. I wish you all an enjoyable read of this issue of *Revista Cirugía de Columna*, which will hopefully inspire you to submit your own research.