



Citations or Likes: this dilemma cannot exist

Citações ou Curtidas: este dilema não pode existir

Social media is used in the society to connect, educate and communicate¹.

A medical profile on the networks must reach the targeted audience, have scientifically and ethically appropriate content, in addition to being efficient in terms of marketing.

However, judging medical ability and competence based solely on the number of likes or social media views does not seem logical and would have been unbelievable a few years ago. Unfortunately, people place a competence value on the number of followers or views, as if popularity was synonymous of quality. Arguing that a product or a professional has merit because it has popular support is one of the oldest argumentation tactics. It is also one of the most flawed².

Fortunately, science and academia are so important that even to analyze the effects of social media it is necessary to carry out studies. Bath et al. (2022) recently published a study whose methodology involved creating a fictitious social media profile with images of surgical results. The authors demonstrated that the best surgical results were more important than the number of followers or likes in terms of the greater probability of recruiting new patients. However, the aesthetic results were more important than the certification of the professional in the specialty council. Also, according to Dorfman et al. (2019), the total number of followers on social media was more important for positioning on the first pages of search engines than the ranking of the medical school in which the professional attended or the active years of practice.

I don't consider the role of social media any less important. But they are different things. Medical and professional competence involves education, training, continuous education and scientific production. The role of scientific performance in the valuation of professionals is not comparable to the popularity in the media or the results obtained and published in countries where medical regulations allow it. The publication of a scientific article is evidence of the importance of this study as a contributor to the development and improvement of medicine, education and patient care.

Furthermore, there is still another side of social media to be explored by the medical profession, as true allies, using them for the promotion and dissemination of scientific publications. Social media can be a good tool for the dissemination of scientific publications, for a positive reinforcement of the academic importance in the professional's activity⁵. Sathianathen et al. and several other studies⁷⁻¹⁰ demonstrate that article visibility on social media boosts the number of citations and may even be another early measure of scientific impact.

We always must publish.

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Editor-in-chief.

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