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What was the participation of Latin authors in TOP journals in internal medicine during 2021? A brief bibliometric analysis

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In the field of medical scientific research and publication, there are few Latin American countries whose production is remarkable, although not comparable to that of high-income countries. The lack of investment for innovation is recognized as the main cause. Despite this, there are Latin authors who are making their contribution to the scientific heritage with high-quality studies.¹ But how much participation do Latin authors have in research published by TOP internal medicine journals? Answering this question is part of the actions to achieve the current goals set by academic medicine regarding scientific development of low- and middle-income countries.²

A bibliometric analysis was carried out based on the information available on the journals in the TOP five belonging to the subject area and category: internal medicine; according to the Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR), in order to assess the participation of Latin authors during the last year (2021) in articles published in internal medicine journals with the greatest impact worldwide, according to 2020 metrics. The journals analyzed were selected based on SJR indicator, H index according to Scopus, highest percentile according to Scopus and H5 index according to Google Scholar: *JAMA Internal Medicine* (SJR: 5.140), *Annals of Internal Medicine* (SJR: 3.839), *Hypertension* (SJR: 2.986), *Journal of Internal Medicine* (SJR: 2.625) and *Journal of General Internal Medicine* (SJR: 1.746). Metrics and data on the number of published articles, participating authors, Latin authors and publications according to typology were extracted.

The considered typology of publications for classification was: original articles, reviews (narrative, systematic and meta-analysis) and other types (any other type of manuscript, e.g. letters to the editor). The participation of collaborative groups was not considered.

A total of 2676 published articles were identified. 34.9% were original articles ($n = 935$), 5.4% were reviews ($n = 145$) and 59.6% were articles included in the category of other types ($n = 1596$) (Figure 1). A total of 14 999 authors participated in the aforementioned publications, 1.05% were Latin authors ($n = 158$) and only 16.5% of them were main authors ($n = 26/158$). Respect the total number of publications of each type, Latin authors participated more frequently in original articles ($n = 116$; 12.4%) and less frequently in reviews ($n = 2$; 1.4%). Of the total number of publications, the participation of Latin authors was only 5.9%.

Journal of Internal Medicine was the journal with the highest participation of Latin authors in the total number of articles published (25.35%) and in the total number of authors (3.38%), followed by *Hypertension* in both categories (13.29% and 1.48%, respectively). *Hypertension* also was the journal with the highest number of articles with Latinos as main authors ($n = 11/63$; 17.5%); although, the journal with the highest proportion of Latinos as main authors in relation to the total number of articles with Latino participation was *Annals of Internal Medicine* ($n = 4/9$; 44%). According to the types of articles, *Journal of Internal Medicine* led in the Latino participation over the total of

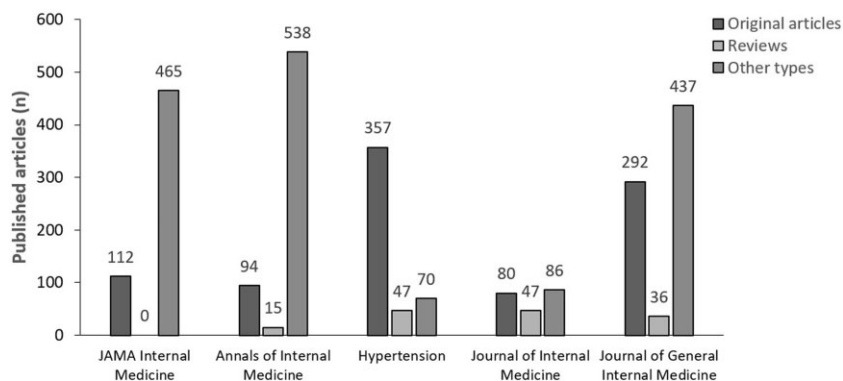


Figure 1. Distribution of the total number of articles published in TOP internal medicine journals during 2021, according to their typology.

original articles (50%) and in other types (15.12%), and *Annals of Internal Medicine* in reviews (6.67%). During 2021, out of the total articles published, *Hypertension* was the journal that published the highest proportion of original articles (75.3%), *Journal of Internal Medicine* published the highest proportion of reviews (22.1%) and *Annals of Internal Medicine* the highest proportion of other types (83.2%).

The results of this bibliometric analysis offer an overview of the current state of Latin participation in global scientific production in the field of internal medicine. Despite *Journal of Internal Medicine* being identified as the journal with the highest coverage for Latin authors, particularly in original articles, the collected data showed a low density of Latin authors publishing in TOP internal medicine journals during 2021 (5.9%). Approximately 1 out of every 20 articles included a Latin author; and Latin authors only represented 1% of the total number of participating authors.

This kind of investigations are needed to generate useful information for assessing the accomplishment of global objectives regarding the promotion of scientific development

in low- and middle-income countries. According to our findings, there is a lot of work to be done before achieving a representative Latin participation in the international research efforts aimed at addressing challenges in the field of internal medicine.

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