

## Comments to the Proposal of a New Publindex Model by *Innovar Journal*

In late 2022, the Directorate of Science of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Minciencias) of Colombia presented the technical adjustments to the Classification Model for Colombian Scientific Journals with the aim of updating them by adopting the most recent conceptual and methodological developments in order to assess the impact of Colombian scientific production. This presentation called for a public consultation on the implications and changes of this Journal Classification Model, seeking to gather inputs that would enhance the proposal and thus achieve a model that would promote the quality of scientific journals through a classification system. Unfortunately, the public consultation was done through a Google Form limited to 500 characters per comment. Given the importance of the discussion of this public policy issue, and the limitations of the way in which Minciencias convened this public consultation, from Universidad Nacional de Colombia we wanted to present some critical comments about this proposal for the Classification Model. In this sense, the purpose of the editorial note of this issue of *Innovar* is to present various comments on this new model. In addition to our comments, this document includes the voices of *Revista Literatura: Teoría, Historia, Crítica* and *ACTIO Journal of Technology in Design, Film Arts and Visual Communication*, and some other opinions on the subject.

For some years, the National System of Science, Technology and Innovation (SNCTEI) has been changing the way in which science and scientific knowledge are recognized as public policy tools to achieve social objectives such as, for example, economic development or, recently, sustainable development (Charum, 2004; Fernández-Polcuch *et al.*, 2016). In this sense, the Colombian National Planning Department (DNP), through CONPES document 4069 of 2021, characterizes the status of the SNCTEI as a small contribution to development and, consequently, advocates for a public policy that increases the contribution of the SNCTEI to the cultural changes that a knowledge society demands. In this context, the new public administration has deployed a technology to calculate academic work that hierarchizes and classifies university work (Humphrey & Gendron, 2013) of individuals (professors, researchers) and research groups, institutions, and countries for the sake of alleged efficiency, productivity and the quality of academic work (Vega-Cantor, 2015).

Publindex, as part of the SNCTEI, has sought the standardization of quality and national visibility criteria, aiming to improve the competitiveness of national journals at the international level. For this, until 2016 there was a journal measurement and classification model that allowed to improve editorial policies and practices, as well as a qualification of editorial teams and committees. Based on the inclusion of the impact factor (IF), in the call 768 of 2016, Publindex considered that the quality of an editorial project is limited to its position in any of the quartiles of the Journal Citation Report (JCR), the scimago Journal Report (SJR), or the quartile of Google Scholar H5. This change in the understanding of editorial quality was widely rejected and criticized in Colombia (Arias *et al.*, 2020; Gómez-Morales, 2019; Gómez-Zapata, 2019).

Despite the various calls to rethink the relevance of including the impact factor in the journal classification model,<sup>1</sup> Minciencias intends to maintain a foreignizing criterion, technically renamed as “impact by combination of metrics” (ICM) by thematic categories, under the premise of (i) expanding the universe of citation sources, (ii) reducing the limitations of classic indices (JCR and SJR), and (iii) maintaining a level of rigor to increase the quality, visibility and impact of Colombian journals.

This ICM maintains the classification of journals into quartiles, based on the SJR and JCR, i.e., the IF for Scopus and Web of Science. Furthermore, it weighs 20% of the PoP H5, plus 40% of the CiteScore, plus 40% of the Scopus H5. With this technical jam, Minciencias intends to compare Colombian journals with international publications to tell us what the post-colonialism cabalists confirm: i) we are not foundational in the English-speaking disciplinary discussions, ii) we are not so consumed by the world of the North—the English-speaking one—which legitimizes the study of the socio-contextual problems of the South; iii) we are not the ones that scimago Research Group expects us to be, because if we were, their recommendations would no longer be a source of income for them.

<sup>1</sup> See “The Leiden Manifesto” (Hicks *et al.*, 2015), the DORA initiative (<https://sfedora.org/>), and the statement on citation rates and editorial practices of various publishers in 2016 (Desde el Jardín de Freud, 2016).

Again, *Innovar Journal* invites Minciencias to recognize the technical and sociopolitical criticisms of using the IF metric, namely: i) there is no relationship between the quality (citations) of individual work and of the journal (Adams *et al.*, 2019; Molas-Gallart & Ràfols, 2018); ii) the citation windows and the statistical normalization of disciplinary fields with epistemological differences (Van Leeuwen, 2012) are arbitrary; iii) it is inappropriate for public policy to evaluate the quality of journals based on citations of authors' works (Adams *et al.*, 2019; Callaway, 2016; Molas-Gallart & Ràfols, 2018); and iv) this approach enables relevance agendas (*percentile prominence*) for research and publications in various contexts and socio-organizational needs, creating a subordinate integration to the English-speaking North (Gómez-Morales, 2018; Molas-Gallart & Ràfols, 2018; Ràfols, 2012).

The current Government has been elected as a promise of change for Colombian society. We believe that this change calls for rethinking the criteria for understanding and measuring the quality of academic work as well as the journal classification model, in particular. Continuing to import ways of seeing our scientific work from the "developed" world (Escobar, 1998) can limit the way in which the potential of scientific research contributes to the transformation of the social needs of a country.

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### **Comments to the Proposal of a New Publindex model by *Revista Literatura: Teoría, Historia, Crítica***

The new Journal Classification Model (Minciencias, 2022) and the guidelines of the proposed call severely compromise the capacity of academic journals and all actors involved to achieve the objectives of higher education (Law 30 of 1992, Chapter II) and scientific and technological research (Law 2162 of 2021, Article 5) in Colombia, understood as practices and policies aimed at the progress and improvement of society and the nation.

Instead of being a roadmap to consolidate Colombian journals as autonomous agents in the academic field, the Publindex call proposes a series of perverse incentives for Colombian journals from the moment they define their value based on characteristics inherently linked to their classification in international databases (scimago, wos, and Scopus, among others). By turning an indicator into a

purpose, Publindex virtually discourages the autonomy of publications and the flexibility that leads to authentic innovations and pioneering research in the country.

These databases— which are one of the drivers of the worrying trend of the accumulation of power and intellectual capital of academia in a few hands—also have a clear conflict of interest when some of its members are part of the technical committee that designed this call, as in the case of Atilio Bustos González, associate director of scimago. As an academic community we must oppose a classification model emerging from a situation that was clearly compromised by a conflict of economic interests.

We do not want to deny the importance of formulating criteria that encourage good research practices and the creation of a strong editorial ethics; however, the Publindex criteria for all phases of the editorial work reflect a conception of national research as an export product that must respond to the logic of the international academic market and not to the strengthening, autonomy and creation of academic networks in Latin America. The progressive quotas of international authors pose the following questions: Who publishes the works by Colombian researchers? How does Publindex expect academic publications to contribute to the creation of strong and supportive academic networks?

Finally, there should be no doubt that this is a short-sighted and inflexible model, and it seems to take into account only the research dynamics of journals in the area of exact sciences to the detriment of humanities research. With such a model, it is impossible for Publindex to try to understand the dynamics, needs and possibilities of knowledge in the social and human sciences.

Below, we leave specific comments on the most critical aspects of the new model:

### **Validation criteria of the evaluation and visibility process, Phase II**

#### ***For authors***

Publindex proposes that 90% of the authors should be external to the publishing institution and, of this percentage, 30% should be international by 2023, 40% by 2024 and 50% by 2025 onwards. These quotas would cause journals to lose their editorial autonomy and the incentives to seek to expand the areas of research we publish. For example, our journal publishes a monographic issue every year with specific topics such as children's literature, contemporary indigenous literature, Latin American poetry, among others. These issues usually have a limited number of authors interested in publishing. Many times, these issues are born from national and intra-university research

seminars and incubators, so the inbreeding quotas proposed by Publindex would discourage this type of research proposals: the journal could not support nascent research spaces or intervene satisfactorily in academic debates. *We suggest that the share of external affiliation is 60% and that the share of international authors is set at 20% without annual increases.*

#### ***For editors (in-chief, associate or guest)***

Publindex journals expects international editors of a journal to have doctoral training in the area and:

H-index greater than or equal to 5 for social sciences and humanities, and greater than or equal to 10 for the other large areas through the wos or Scopus indexing platforms or comparable through 10 Q1 or Q2 articles published on the area. (Minciencias, 2022, p. 28)

Publishers with contractual links in the country are expected to be renowned researchers classified as associate or above for the 2023 call and senior or above from 2024 onwards or with an H-index greater than 5 through the wos or Scopus indexing platforms (Minciencias, 2022, p. 28).

The parameters of wos and Scopus are not equivalent to those of Google Scholar, so the Publindex requirement is ambiguous and there is no further explanation about the change or choice of said indices. Likewise, this requirement restricts the autonomy of the journal and the freedom to choose editors and contributors. *We suggest that the requirement for international publishers be reduced to doctoral training.*

#### ***For editorial/scientific committees***

Publindex considers it necessary that "at least 80% of the members of the editorial/scientific committee [have] external affiliation to the institution to which the journal belongs" (Minciencias, 2022, p. 28). Of these, *"at least 60% of members with external affiliation must belong to international institutions"* (Minciencias, 2022, p. 28). In addition, members of the editorial/scientific committees must have doctoral training and "at least 80% of the members of the editorial or scientific committee must be recognized as an associate or superior researcher (for researchers in Colombian entities) or have an H-index greater than or equal to 10 (for researchers not in Colombian entities) through the wos or Scopus indexing platforms." We insist that these types of quotas linked to international indicators restrict editorial autonomy and strip journals of their flexibility to have diverse committees that can be consolidated by means that are not necessarily based on indicators. For our particular case, it is important to note that our

members, being researchers who have contributed to their respective areas, are not always indexed in wos or Scopus, so we do not expect these databases to be able to account for the value of our academic collaborators.

*We suggest that the requirements be limited to the members of the editorial committee having doctoral training or being associate or full-time professors of the institution to which they are affiliated.*

#### ***For reviewers***

Publindex requires that peer-reviewers report "publications in the area of knowledge in the last three years prior to the evaluation in indexed journal [in] wos/Scopus" (Minciencias, 2022, p. 28). This criterion does not take into account how research and credibility in the humanities works: Pretending that research "expires" in the humanities fundamentally ignores the type of knowledge we produce. Moreover, in practical terms, this would make peer evaluation impossible for any subject other than a recent academic trend. *We suggest eliminating these requirements or, instead, proposing criteria grounded in the dynamics of research in the area of humanities.*

#### **International visibility**

Publindex considers it reasonable to set an annual quota of 20% of articles written in English. This position ignores the possibilities of international visibility that are not linked to English-speaking cultures. *Literatura: Teoría, Historia, Crítica* has consistently published articles in Portuguese, but it seems that it is disregarded against English, which, again, has become the *lingua franca* of research in exact sciences. On the other hand, it is worth noting that, as a Latin American journal, we must also consider that many of our readers do not speak English as their native language. *We suggest lowering the quota to 10% of the annual articles and, in addition, opening the possibility that they are in a foreign language and not only in English.*

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#### **Comments to the Proposal of a New Publindex Model by *ACTIO Journal of Technology in Design, Film Arts and Visual Communication***

*ACTIO Journal of Technology in Design, Film Arts and Visual Communication* is an inter-campus editorial project at the National University of Colombia that, since its inception, has considered the rules established by journal classification models without basing its work on these because its

objective is to become a top-level academic forum in the search for a balance between the establishment and innovation, a characteristic of all creative disciplines.

After carefully reviewing the document, we present our comments and suggestions, in the hope that they will be taken into account. Otherwise, the proposed model could mean the death of the editorial effort towards indexing this and other journals.

We recognize the intention to contribute to the improvement of the quality of publications through the incorporation of criteria of internationally-recognized indexing systems. However, it is surprising that scimago Research Group is part of the technical committee that prepared said document. Although it is an industry player, it works with a specific database belonging to a recognized commercial provider, which could introduce a bias.

This model is formulated to classify scientific journals. However, the model applies to all academic journals, including journals that address technology, but from different perspectives such as art and design, like ours. The model they propose is an instrument that measures only the variables that were considered within some established ranges, neglecting everything that is not included within the variables that are important for that *ethos*. Clearly, this bias is in favor of the so-called "hard sciences," openly excluding the academic disciplines where impact indicators are not measured by the number of citations, to name just one example. That is, measuring all academic journals from the parameters of scientific journals makes it much more difficult for journals on humanities, design and the arts to comply with such conditions, especially when the compliance percentages established are apparently common in the hard sciences, but scarce in other academic areas (this is shown in point 5).

There is a contradiction between the objectives and impact indices compared to the search and effectiveness of the social appropriation of science. On the one hand, it promotes the dissemination and social appropriation of local innovative knowledge but, on the other, exaggerates its internationalization. We need to find a middle ground that allows the development of science from the national to the international and vice versa. The demand for an increasing quota of articles by international authors does not ensure that there will really be a dialogue with the world, much less a social appropriation of knowledge. This can be achieved, for example, if instead of simply requiring a number of international authors, the joint preparation of articles between national and international authors, the management of joint work, international meetings in congresses and continuous forums was encouraged.

One of the most critical points is the excessive increase in the percentage of authors external to the publishing entity, especially for publishing entities funded with public resources, such as ours. On the one hand, while it is important to avoid inbreeding, it is also important to provide quality academic spaces for the community to put the knowledge generated into academic discussion through rigorous processes. On the other hand, if an author is a graduate of the publishing institution and is not affiliated with any other entity, he/she is counted as an internal author, which is not technically correct. In addition to the above, the most serious aspect of having such a high quota of authors from outside the institution (90%) implies that its economic resources, in this case public resources, are invested to publish knowledge generated by other institutions, to the loss of the recognition and dissemination of its own research and thinking. If we talk about teaching, it would be as if 90% of the students trained and graduated by one institution were enrolled in other universities (private or public).

With regard to reviewers, raising the percentage of external reviewers to 90% makes one of the most difficult and crucial processes of the editorial process even more difficult. Reviewers are experts who work *ad honorem*, solely for their commitment to the academy, donating their time and expertise to the construction of knowledge. However, the format of academic writing in indexed journals is not necessarily the language of design and arts, which makes it difficult to engage such expert peers. This, combined with the fact that such peers must have published in indexed journals in the last three years, as established in the model, makes the search for such peers much more difficult, and also does not guarantee the quality of the review.

We also find it exaggerated that editors cannot publish their articles in the journal they are part of. For example, journals like *Applied Ergonomics* (Q1) ask editors to also publish in the journal they edit. The quota of a maximum of 10% of members of the editorial committees (which is also very high) is already an effective inbreeding control mechanism. Why preventing an editor from contributing to the journal they are affiliated? What is the editorial quality model that is promoted if editors cannot offer it from the journals they represent?

Finally, there is the absence of a more qualified debate on the disciplines of the area of design and arts. As stated in point 2, the model was designed for all scientific journals, but it ignores that there is more than one equally scientific model of knowledge construction. Design and the arts also illuminate and enhance the cognitive and sensitive avatars of today's techno-perceptive, hyper-visualized and

globalized world, and should be recognized in the classification model.

In sum, we value the effort and intentions of the model and have worked to meet the criteria of the models that Publindex has proposed since the very beginning of our history as a journal, as one of our interests as a project of dialogue and dissemination of academic knowledge is to achieve indexation. However, this model is perverse and even unethical for journals that are funded with public resources, which not only wish to construct international dialogues, but also to consider the development of the local academic community and the *cultural, scientific and collective project of the nation* as a duty. The above is also exacerbated in the humanities and the arts, because the demands are biased by an exclusive scientific *ethos*, thus ignoring that the academic world is interdisciplinary, diverse and rich in nuances and solutions to the social and cultural problems that affect the country and the world that interconnects it is embedded with.

Therefore, our proposal is as follows:

Maintain 50% of internal authors as in the previous model. To promote national and international dialogue, at least 50% of the articles in this 50%—that is, 25%—should include internal and external authors. In this way, the creation of local knowledge is promoted in dialogue with national and international knowledge, avoiding inbreeding but without turning the journal into a mechanism for the production of foreign knowledge with public resources.

Allow the editorial team to write at least 10% of the papers accepted for publication, without excluding the editor.

Maintain the current percentage (20%) of internal reviewers and eliminate the requirement of them publishing works in indexed journals over the last three years.

Make the application of the H indicator more flexible as a quality criterion for publishers, including not only WOS and Scopus, but Google Scholar as well.

Debate and include the academic reality and knowledge generation of visual communication, design and the arts, so that the journal classification model is inclusive and in tune with interdisciplinarity and digital technologies, and the extensively sensitive and narrative knowledge of our days.

For any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## Comments to the Proposal of a New Publindex Model

*Innovar* has generously consulted my opinion on version 2 of the Publindex Journal Classification Model document, published in November 2022 by Minciencias, with the advice of the Academic Technical Board.

In principle, I could point out at least three problematic dimensions of the document: the first is related to a series of inaccuracies and gaps present in the document; the second, which I will not delve into, is related to what is called the policy "objective;" and finally, I will try to elaborate on my doubts regarding the model's "novelties."

First of all, I would say that I have doubts regarding the competence of the technical committee. Due to time constraints I restrict my reservations to the representatives of the social sciences: neither Gustavo Adolfo Silva Carrero, nor Jorge Enrique Elías Caro, nor Andrea Johana Aguilar Barreto reach a modest H10 on Google Scholar (to be broad), so how could they match the profile proposed for the selection of the members of this committee? Furthermore, neither they nor Pablo Vallejo Medina have any expertise in scientometrics or bibliometrics, nor publications on this subject, not even in a national C-type journal that Minciencias wants desperately to eliminate. It would be convenient to see the representatives of other fields of science and understand if being an editor of a national journal is enough competence in the areas of metrics for science, because in the social and human sciences we do have important people who would by far better and more legitimately represent the interests of the field.

This is, to say the least, a major inconsistency that the document should either clarify or rectify with a more representative panel, in order to understand that the suitability that should be weighted above all others is in terms of the measurement of science, rather than just based on the recognition acquired by following the pattern of success that the evaluation system proposes. These biases and compromises the vision of the participants, as they are called to validate the system that erected them as archetypal icons of the social sciences and, therefore, unelected representatives of the fields of knowledge. One cannot ring the bells and walk in the procession. Of course, it takes all sorts to make a world, and among those who have gained the privileges reserved for the docile and obedient, there are also colleagues with great experience and capacities in editorial matters and with specific knowledge on the measurement of science. However, the discussion and the opinions issued by them would be far more informed and less positive than those of those who do not possess such skills and knowledge.



Notice the fallacy: the most fundamental criterion for the profile, specific knowledge, is only a suggested criterion, while, on the other hand, what the system has decided as its ideal becomes the necessary condition. It is as if we were to choose the birds of the forest that sing most beautifully and, for this purpose, we were to select a committee composed of the birds that sing most beautifully and not of the birds that know the necessary musical theory.

The other great imprecision that implies a void in the text has to do with a series of statements made about the National Bibliographic Index. Statements such as "The greatest advances in Colombia, specifically for the measurement of the impact of national scientific journals, have been made with the creation of the National Bibliographic Index (IBN, in Spanish)" (Minciencias, 2022, p. 6) or

After three calls, in 2000 the first version of the National Bibliographic Index - PUBLINDEX, which is currently one of the main references of the national investigative dynamics (sic) and is one of the most important evaluation processes carried out by the entity, was presented. (p. 6)

I say that these are inaccuracies because, further in the document, Minciencias pretends to pass off the never realized IBN project as if it were the same as the Publindex evaluation system, when in fact they are two totally different things. That is the huge gap that the policy has not corrected and does not seem interested in correcting: Colombia does not yet have the promised IBN since the beginning of the measurement exercises in the mid-nineties of the last century. Neither when it was in charge of the Colombian Observatory of Science and Technology (OCYT), nor when it returned to Colciencias has the promise of an information system on national specialized publication been fulfilled: the National Citation Index is a major debt that more than 30 years of measurement policies have failed to fulfill to the country and that, except for punctual and sporadic efforts in sociology and psychology, we know practically nothing about the publication and consumption patterns of the national scientific communities. Based on this kind of unawareness, it is assumed that the national publication lacks quality and has no impact; that is the "scientific" practice of Minciencias. The most outrageous thing is that the Ministry pretends to pass off what is nothing more than an outsourced information service contracted with foreign-based organizations (scimago Research Group), which perhaps does not cover more than 10% of the national journals<sup>2</sup> at prices that go beyond the principle of probity in public spending, as the IBN.

<sup>2</sup> Counting the population of journals before the slaughter orchestrated by the great commendator scimago with the compromise of the national scientific elites in 2014-2015 as a reference.

With all the dollars that have been extracted by transnational editorial cartels and a suitable scientific and political direction within Minciencias,<sup>3</sup> the country would now have the tools to make a true map of national science. When I say "true," I mean representative, not of the "best" according to an "expert" and biased criterion of "the birds that sing most beautifully"—as I explained before—but true to the extent that the work of mapping national science from the data that have been collected since 1996 and estimating the impact of Colombian specialized journals in the institutionalization and consolidation of relevant and pertinent research communities and agendas as a priority policy action, i. e., a National Bibliographic Index, is taken seriously. Only then, the relative impact of this national science on regional, first, and international currents, last, and not the other way around, could be measured.

The whitewashed mestizos that make up the self-proclaimed national scientific elite will claim that this is a mediocre provincialism, but as I have claimed in other works, the bloodshed of the publication of papers-indexed-by-packs that a perverse internationalization approach has favored more and more intensely since the end of the last century, and whose political results, judging by the growing disagreement with the measurement system that was heroically expressed in the streets at the end of 2018, are counterproductive—to say the least—is just as or more questionable. If we are to be exact, the impact of those packages of indexed papers that cost between USD 500 and 5,000 is reduced to a few papers published by some Colombians who do not even live in the country and who, of course, work in science and technology systems financed with a percentage of the GDP that far exceeds the national investment in R&D in Colombia, but from which it is expected to generate results comparable to those of countries that time ago exceeded the goal of 1% of the GDP proposed in the seventies of the last century, which our national government has long fail to achieve.

At this point, I would like to point out the void of the document regarding the balance that it promises in relation to that great constituent of 2018, which was expressed in the streets and reflected in a 15-item document signed by the Government in office back then.<sup>4</sup> Of these, I believe,

See the Alternative Publindex Report at [https://www.academia.edu/35083336/Alternative\\_Publindex\\_Report](https://www.academia.edu/35083336/Alternative_Publindex_Report)

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the instability at the top of the highest national science and technology agency has been enormous (something like one director per year), and that since its transformation into a Ministry, political interests in managing clientele and hiring have deteriorated Minciencias executive and scientific capacity.

<sup>4</sup> See the document at <https://www.eltiempo.com/uploads/files/2018/12/14/SCAN%20-1-.pdf>.

none has been fulfilled. We expected at least that point 15 of those agreements, the revision of the "Publindex system," to have been comprehensive and substantial rather than a repetition. Once again, the conformation of these discussion panels, as in the case of the Academic Technical Board that developed the document we discussed, was questionable, and for the same reasons: the research groups and editorial bodies, which since 2015 opposed in different<sup>5</sup> scenarios to the changes introduced in the evaluation models by the Colciencias Subdirectorate, headed by Lucy Gabriela Delgado, were not summoned to said panels. Instead, again, the scientific elites organized in different university associations, all of them representatives of hegemonic science, ended up controlling the sessions of the discussion panels; in fact, Lucy herself, but now as spokesperson of the movement, participated in the discussion panels.

Readers can imagine the magnitude of the entrapment in order not to change anything, like everything else, in the Duque administration.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that, although the 2022 document that we are commenting on claims to have considered the recommendations of those panels, this balance is not presented in said document or anywhere else. There is, therefore, a total lack of transparency in both processes on the part of Colciencias:<sup>7</sup> "three years and 24 work sessions" (Minciencias, 2022, p. 10), summarized in three paragraphs that omit the eight points or the 25 recommendations, the discussion panels, and the participants.

Regarding the second dimension, that of politics, I simply reiterate what has already been said in many other works and scenarios against internationalization and that Minciencias, in an unscientific but systematic attitude, is determined to ignore: it has neither debated nor refuted them. It seems that there is an implicit order to cancel my publications, since I am not even mentioned in the background section of the document.<sup>8</sup> The national scientific

leadership, like adolescent tiktokers, only reads and "likes" those who look like them, those who think like them, and those who obey them. To sum up, I restate that the document we are commenting on once again reveals the fallacy of a leadership that confuses the policy goal with the indicator. This fallacy is embodied in a definition of Publindex that evades its central objective, which is to evaluate in order to euphemistically claim that it is only a "quality-based classification system" (Minciencias, 2022, p. 15) as an organizing principle—something that, as I suggest below, is also questionable—and is operationalized in a general objective that shamelessly assures that "classification promotes quality" (p. 15). The fact is that the crux of it all lies in the idea of quality and how to establish it, which brings us to the final consideration of how to measure it.

First of all—let's be clear—the quality of a journal does not have a direct measure, only indirect, and that is what we call *indexes*. But an index must be well constructed, it must relate relevant variables. Since the old Colciencias changed its paradigm of promoting national publication, measuring its production by packages (Decree 1444 of 1992), to measuring packages of indexed international publications by "*Colombian authors*" (Decree 1279 of 2002) to promote internationalization, it has not managed to understand or stubbornly insists on ignoring that the impact factor is not the appropriate index to measure the quality of a particular *paper* or published result. Since it was coined by Garfield (1955), the impact factor is an average that speaks of the handicaps of a journal in an editorial circuit. Hence, a policy that promotes the rise in the scale of the indicator as a goal confuses the differences in the impact factor with differences in quality, when in fact they are the expression of market disadvantages. The internationalization policy errs when it distinguishes and organizes as better or worse what is in principle only more or less cited, because of statistical effects derived from the material, demographic and cultural configuration of the global publishing market (Gómez-Morales, 2015, 2018).

So, the "novelty" of the new model is that it does nothing more than measure the same thing three times with the same source, the only variation being the observation window. They do not even present an analysis of the independence of variables, but uncritically add things together as if they were different, when in reality they are three forms derived from the Impact Factor that, in a spurious way, are either extrapolated as a scientific quality of a particular contribution, or fall into the crude positivism of interpreting the Combined Metrics Index as an objective measure, as if it were a "there-and-there-outside thing," thus ignoring the statistical effects of the differences in the material, demographic and cultural configuration of the

<sup>5</sup> See my intervention at <https://youtu.be/FLWEbzJL7nk> (min. 0 to 1:43).

<sup>6</sup> We did not expect much from that administration anyway; that is why we chose change and expected something different from the "Government of Change."

<sup>7</sup> The national press keeps extensive records of this enormous dissatisfaction of what we called at the time the primary constituent of the SNCYT, composed of the social sciences, humanities and education, which we outnumber (individuals, projects, groups) wherever you look at the old administrative areas of Colciencias.

<sup>8</sup> And yet I was responsible for the establishment of the measurement baseline and the original conceptualization of the model, and I published it in a journal that is not only internationally indexed, but is a publication with more than 50 citations—the kind that the Ministry loves. But the desire to eliminate dissent insights and condemn all divergent opinions, the anti-scientific evasion of the debate, is more powerful (Gómez-Morales *et al.*, 1998).

publishing market. This is a call for Minciencias to embrace sociology thinking, please!

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