



ELSEVIER


<http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jiph>

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Discrepancies with the bibliometric assessment of Mayaro-related publications

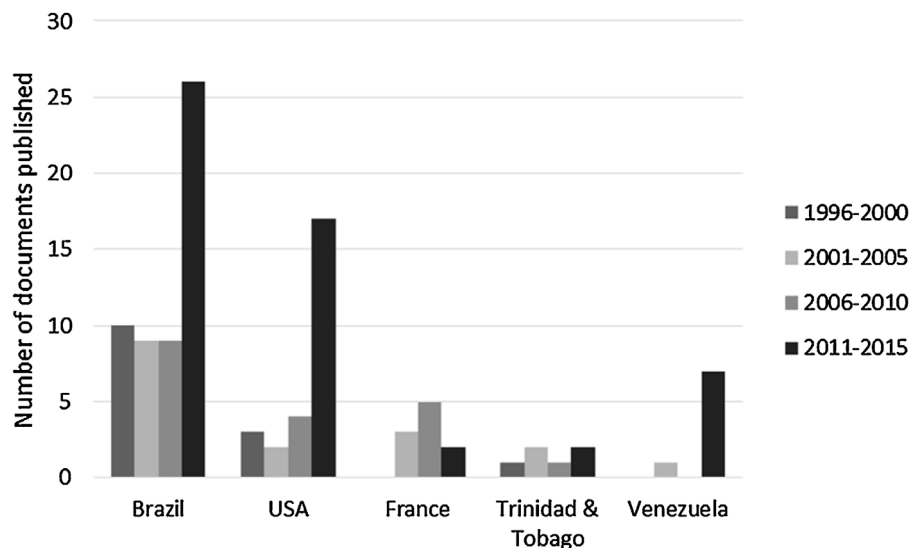


Dear Editor,

Due to my interest in bibliometrics, I carefully read a recently published letter to the editor that analyzed Mayaro virus-related publications [1]. My attention was drawn to a table that listed the top 20 countries with scientific production on Mayaro research as the numbers seemed anomalous. According to their estimation, using the Science Citation Index (from Thomson Reuters) Brazil contributed with 52.21% of the documents, while in the case of the Scopus database Brazil accounted for 26.78%. Although the journal coverage of both databases is not the same, in the natural sciences area is similar [2], so such a difference for a single country is peculiar. Therefore, the query was repeated (on July 25th, 2016) using the term ‘‘Mayaro’’ to search in titles, abstracts and keywords of all the documents registered by

Scopus. However, the search revealed only 179 documents published since 1968 instead of 351. Thus, a new query was made adding the term ‘‘MAYV’’ as it might have been involuntarily omitted in the published work, but the new result revealed an additional 5 documents (hence a total of 182). The database search showed that the most prolific country was Brazil with 69 documents, followed by the United States (37 documents) France (11 documents), Trinidad & Tobago (9 documents) and Venezuela (9 documents). As Fig. 1 shows, the number of documents increased in the last five years in Brazil, the United States and Venezuela. However, 59.4% of the documents published by the United States were in collaboration with another country characterized by having humid tropical forest environments.

Another discrepancy found concerned the main institutions that had authored these documents. Our results revealed that Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (from Brazil) was the main contributor (34 documents), followed by Universidade de Sao Paulo-USP (Brazil) and the University of



**Fig. 1** Number of documents published by country during the last 20 years. Each bar represent the accumulation of a five-year period.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jiph.2016.08.009>

1876-0341/© 2016 King Saud Bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences. Published by Elsevier Limited. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (USA) tied at 15 documents each. Next in the list was Instituto Evandro Chagas from Brazil (13 documents) followed by another Brazilian institution, Fundacao Oswaldo Cruz (11 documents). It is important to emphasize that this database search was performed 20 months later than the original one.

I am aware that bibliometric data collected from international databases may present some minor fluctuations dependent on the date it was retrieved, caused by a number of reasons such as amendments to the author's address or by retractions due to plagiarism. At a time when resources are scarce for research, it is important to be as accurate as possible. Inconsistencies could have serious complications for countries or institutions if the results do not reflect their actual performance.

## Funding

The research was funded by Proyecto Financiamiento Basal PFB-016.

## References

- [1] Patino-Barbosa AM, Bedoya-Arias JE, Cardona-Ospina JA, Rodriguez-Morales AJ. Bibliometric assessment of the scientific production of literatura regarding Mayaro. *J Infect Public Health* 2016;9:532–4.
- [2] Mongeon P, Paul-Hus A. The journal coverage of Web of Science and Scopus: a comparative analysis. *Scientometrics* 2016;106:213–28.

Dr. Erwin Krauskopf<sup>a,b,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Facultad de Ciencias Biologicas, Universidad Andres Bello, Santiago, Chile*

<sup>b</sup> *Fundacion Ciencia & Vida, Zanartu 1482, Santiago, Chile*

\* Correspondence to: Facultad de Ciencias Biologicas, Republica 239 Segundo Piso, Santiago, Chile.

E-mail address: [erwin.krauskopf@unab.cl](mailto:erwin.krauskopf@unab.cl)

28 July 2016

Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

**ScienceDirect**