ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Metrics of the articles published in the *Finlay* journal, 2011-2022

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To characterize the articles published in the *Finlay* journal during the period between 2011 and 2022.
Materials and methods: An observational, descriptive, bibliometric study was carried out on the articles published in the *Finlay* journal. The universe consisted of 525 articles. Sampling techniques were not used. The analyzed variables were *number of articles, year of publication, number of authors, origin of the authors, type of article, main topic of the articles, type of study, number of references, number of 5-year-old references, number of citations per article* and *number of citations received by the journal per year*. A descriptive statistics and bibliometrics were used.
Results: The year 2021 stood out with 60 research works (11.38 %). Articles with three authors prevailed (155; 29.52 %), Cienfuegos stood out with 1,074 authors (59.40 %) and original articles (OAs) predominated (243; 46.28 %). Images in medicine (IM) had the highest Price's Index (0.80). Among the OAs, research works with an observational-descriptive approach prevailed (225 published articles, which accounted for 92.59 % out of the total number of OAs). Research related to cardiovascular diseases predominated (116; 22.09 %). A total of 4,870 citations were received, most of them from 2017, with a number of corrected citations (NCC) of 38.3. Meanwhile, the year 2020 had an impact factor (IF) of 3.27.
Conclusions: The *Finlay* journal is a scientific body for the dissemination of research results with extensive achievements and experiences in editorial management. Its growth has been exponential in terms of the number of articles published, prevailing the year 2021. Its issues include research works that show the collaboration between national and foreign authors, highlighting the results of the Cienfuegos province's researchers. In this regard, the topics focus on health problems that are included in the sector's priority health programs, based on original research to a greater extent and coupled with a higher number of citations received especially in 2017.

Keywords: Science; Students; Scientific Production Indicators; Publications; Scientific and Technical Publications (Source: MeSH NLM).

INTRODUCTION

The development of science and innovation require and need the exchange of knowledge among researchers, based on the results they achieve. These findings can be presented, validated and discussed by the broader scientific community. In this context, scientific journals serve as the primary and most transparent scientific body for disseminating research findings.

In the health sciences, the continuous generation and validation of knowledge are essential for scientific and technical progress. Scientific journals in the field of medical sciences play a crucial role in developing the scientific-research competencies of health professionals and students. These specialized media in scientific communication deliver high-impact results to the community [1].

Researchers such as Vitón-Castillo et al. [2] have recognized the growing controversy in the field of scientific communication, particularly regarding the evaluation of scientific output. They also emphasize the importance of evaluating the impact of scientific journals on science, which can be assessed through bibliometric studies based on various indicators.

Bibliometric studies are valuable tools for measuring scientific activity. They provide insights into researcher trends and identify the branches of knowledge that require further development through publication. By employing a range of indicators, these studies can evaluate the quality of editorial management across different levels—whether within a specific topic, scientific journals or databases [3].

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The *Finlay* journal, established in January 1987 by a group of medical students, has become the leading professional scientific body in the Cienfuegos province. It was created to disseminate the findings of health professionals and to support the training of human resources in the healthcare sector. The journal is focused on chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) [4] and operates under the Open Journal Systems (OJS) editorial management platform. Published quarterly, the journal releases an average of 15 articles per issue on chronic NCDs from various fields of knowledge. Its significant scientific contributions have led to its indexing in key databases such as SciELO, Lindex, DOAJ, Redalyc, among others [5].

Véliz-Burgos et al. [5] conducted a study on the scientific output of the *Finlay* journal using the Web of Science platform, covering the period from 2015 to 2017. However, given the journal's extensive editorial history, it is crucial to conduct studies spanning a longer timeframe. Additionally, there is a need to evaluate more comprehensively the journal's impact through indicators that can provide a deeper understanding of its influence. Therefore, this research aims to characterize the articles on NCDs published in the journal from 2011 to 2022.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design and population

An observational, descriptive, bibliometric study was conducted on articles related to NCDs published in the *Finlay* journal from 2011 to 2022. The universe consisted of all articles published in the regular issues of the *Finlay* journal, totaling 525 articles. No sampling techniques were used, so the entire set of articles was included in the analysis. The inclusion criteria covered articles published in the journal's regular issues and available for download from the platform (https://revfinlay.sld.cu/index.php/finlay/index). Exclusion criteria were applied to articles that did not provide sufficient data to analyze at least one of the study variables or that did not comply with the journal's good practice guidelines, resulting in a total of 22 articles.

To minimize potential bias in the research, the following criteria were applied:

- Each signing author listed in the published articles was analyzed independently by their origin, as some articles featured at least one author from a different location than the others.
- For the remaining variables, independent reviews were carried out for each author to rule out possible discrepancies in the tabulation of the results.

Variables and measurements

The following variables were analyzed: number of articles, year of publication (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022), number of authors (one author, two authors, three authors, four authors, five authors or six authors), origin of the authors (Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Cienfuegos, Granma, Guantánamo, Holguín, Isle of Youth, Havana, Las Tunas, Matanzas, Mayabeque, Pinar del Río, Sancti Spíritus, Santiago de Cuba, Villa Clara, International), type of article (letter to the editor, editorial, review article [RA], original article [OA], case report, brief communication, images in medicine [IM]), main topic of the articles, type of study according to the methodology used in OAs, number of references, number of 5-year-old references, number of citations per article and number of citations received by the journal per year.

The following bibliometric indicators were used:

- Degree of collaboration (DC): The ratio of articles published with more than one author to the total number of articles. Values close to or equal to 0 indicate single authorship, while values close to or equal to 1 indicate articles with more than one author [2].
- Power of attraction (PA): The ratio of articles published with author(s) from outside the journal's home region (Cienfuegos) to the total number of articles.
- Price's Index (PI): The ratio of 5-year-old references to the total number of references.
- Number of corrected citations (NCC): The ratio of the number of citations per article to the number of years since its publication.
- Impact factor (IF): This metric expresses the citation index of a given year based on the ratio of number of citations for articles published in the two preceding years to the total number of articles published in those two years [2].

$$\text{IF (2020)} = \frac{\text{(Number of citations in 2020 for articles published in 2018 and 2019)}}{\text{(Number of articles published in 2018 and 2019)}}$$

In addition, the h-index was calculated for each journal (intersection of the number of citations per article and the citations in descending order, from highest to lowest) [2].

The information was collected from each scientific article in PDF format, which was downloaded from the journal's platform (https://revfinlay.sld.cu/index.php/finlay/index). The information was entered in a Microsoft Excel 2010 database, and the Google Scholar search engine was used to determine the number of citations per article.

Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics (absolute frequencies and percentages) were used to analyze the information for each of the variables.

Ethical considerations

The study adhered to the Cuban ethical norms for research in health sciences as well as the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. The Ethics Committee of Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de Cienfuegos and the Centro Provincial de Información de Ciencias Médicas de Cienfuegos (Cienfuegos Provincial Center for Information on Medical Sciences) approved the research.

RESULTS

Out of the total number of analyzed articles (525), the highest number of published papers was recorded in 2021, with 60 articles (11.38 %), followed by 2022 and 2020, with 58 articles (11 %) and 52 articles (9.86 %), respectively (Figure 1).

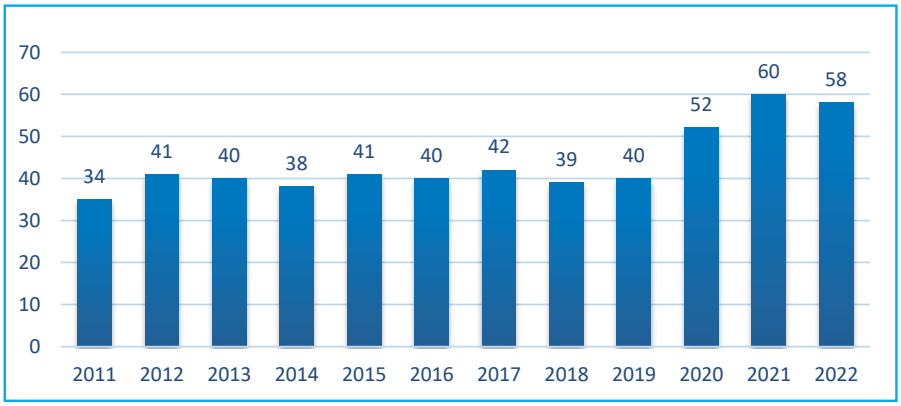

Figure 1. Distribution of articles by year of publication
Source: articles published in the *Finlay* journal.

Articles with three authors prevailed (155 articles, 29.52 %), followed by those with six authors (89 articles, 16.95 %) and one author (86 articles, 16.38 %). The DC accounted for 0.83 (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of articles by number of authors

Number of authors	*n*	%
One author	86	16.38
Two authors	62	11.08
Three authors	155	29.52
Four authors	66	12.57
Five authors	67	12.76
Six authors	89	16.95
Total	525	100.00

Source: articles published in the *Finlay* journal.

A total of 1,808 signing authors contributed to research papers. The Cienfuegos province stood out with 1,074 authors (59.40 %). It was followed by the Havana (275 authors; 15.12 %) and Villa Clara (110 authors; 6.08 %) provinces (Table 2). There were 217 articles belonging to authors outside the Cienfuegos province, equivalent to a PA of 0.41.

Table 2. Distribution of authors by origin

Origin	*n*	%
Camagüey	3	0.16
Ciego de Ávila	1	0.05
Cienfuegos	1,074	59.40
Granma	46	2.54
Guantánamo	4	0.22
Holguín	53	2.93
Isle of Youth	18	0.99
Havana	275	15.12
Las Tunas	37	2.04
Matanzas	1	0.05
Mayabeque	2	0.11
Pinar del Río	40	2.12
Sancti Spíritus	34	1.88
Santiago de Cuba	23	1.27
Villa Clara	110	6.08
International	87	4.81
Total	1,808	100.00

Source: articles published in the *Finlay* journal

OAs predominated (243; 46.28 %) with the highest number of references (5,117; 53.04 %) and highest number of 5-year-old references (2,709; 51.71 %). They were followed by case reports and RAs, with 112 articles (21.33 %) and 93 articles (17.71 %), respectively. Additionally, IM had the highest PI: 0.80 (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of research by type of study

Type of study	Total		References				
	N	%	Number of references	%	Number of 5-year-old references	%	PI
Letter to the editor	48	9.14	302	3.13	209	3.99	0.69
Editorial	10	1.90	82	0.85	60	1.14	0.73
Review article	93	17.71	2,468	25.58	1,376	26.26	0.55
Original article	243	46.28	5,117	53.04	2,709	51.71	0.53
Case report	112	21.33	1,414	14.65	750	14.31	0.53
Brief communication	16	3.04	248	2.57	122	2.32	0.49
Images in medicine	3	0.57	15	0.15	12	0.22	0.8
Total	525	100.00	9,646	100.00	5,238	100.00	0.54

Source: articles published in the *Finlay* journal.

Among the OAs, research works with an observational-descriptive approach prevailed (225 published articles, which accounted for 92.59 % out of the total number of OAs). They were followed by analytical articles (17 research works; 3.23 %).

Regarding the main topics, cardiovascular diseases were the focus of 116 studies (22.09 %), followed by gynecological conditions with 50 studies (9.52 %) and endocrine-metabolic disorders with 49 studies (9.33 %).

A total of 4,870 citations were received across 386 articles, representing 73.25 % of the total number of publications. Notably, the article *El envejecimiento, la vejez y la calidad de vida: ¿éxito o dificultad?* stood out with the highest number of citations (194; 3.98 %) and the highest NCC with 38.3 (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of the most cited articles

Articles*	Authors	Number of citations	%	Year of publication	NCC
El envejecimiento, la vejez y la calidad de vida: ¿éxito o dificultad? (Aging, old age and quality of life: success or difficulty?)	Martínez Pérez et al.	194	3.98	2018	38.3
Las enfermedades crónicas no transmisibles: magnitud actual y tendencias futuras (Chronic noncommunicable diseases: current magnitude and future trends)	Serra Valdés et al.	138	2.83	2018	27.6
Adherencia terapéutica en pacientes con diabetes *mellitus* tipo 2 (Therapeutic adherence in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus)	Ramos Rangel et al.	131	2.68	2017	21.8
Manejo práctico del paciente con diabetes *mellitus* en la atención primaria de salud (Practical management of patients with diabetes mellitus in primary health care)	Rivas Alpizar et al.	129	2.64	2011	10.75
Prevalencia de enfermedades crónicas no transmisibles y factores de riesgo en adultos mayores de Holguín (Prevalence of chronic non-communicable diseases and risk factors in older adults from Holguín)	Miguel Soca et al.	126	2.58	2017	21
Las enfermedades crónicas no transmisibles y la pandemia por COVID-19 (Chronic noncommunicable diseases and the COVID-19 pandemic)	Serra Valdés et al.	117	2.40	2020	39
La diabetes *mellitus*: un reto para la salud pública (Diabetes mellitus: a challenge for public health)	Naranjo Hernández	107	2.19	2016	15.28

*Only articles with more than 100 citations are shown.
Source: articles published in the *Finlay* journal.

In terms of citations, 2017 stood out with the highest count (956 citations, representing 19.63 %), followed by 2018 with 828 citations (17.00 %) and 2016 with 675 citations (13.86 %). The year 2020 recorded the highest IF at 3.27 (Table 5). The journal's h-index was 34.

Table 5. Distribution of the number of citations received by the journal per year

Year	Number of citations*	%	Number of citations**	Number of articles published in the two preceding years	IF
2011	376	7.72	-	-	-
2012	270	5.54	-	-	-
2013	254	5.21	30	75	0.4
2014	223	4.57	36	81	0.44
2015	520	10.67	25	78	0.32
2016	675	13.86	60	79	0.75
2017	956	19.63	89	81	1.09
2018	828	17.00	147	82	1.79
2019	298	6.11	235	81	2.90
2020	272	5.58	259	79	3.27
2021	156	3.20	154	92	1.67
2022	42	0.86	157	112	1.40
Total	4,870	100	-	-	-

*Based on articles published within the respective year.
**Number of citations for articles published in the two preceding years.
(-): IF not applicable for 2011 and 2012, as the number of citations received could not be determined.
Source: articles published in the *Finlay* journal.

DISCUSSION

The research process and scientific development require periodic evaluations to enhance the quality of science. Bibliometric studies in the field of scientific publications facilitate the analysis of scientific production, offering tools and solutions to improve and enhance the editorial quality.

This research identified a predominance of articles published in 2021, with a notable representation of OAs employing an observational-descriptive approach. The Cienfuegos province had the highest number of signing authors, primarily in articles authored by three individuals. Cardiovascular diseases emerged as the main topic. Additionally, there was a noticeable increase in the number of citations.

The *Finlay* journal operates under the OJS editorial management platform, consistent with other Cuban health-related scientific journals operating under the Infomed health network. It adheres to the editorial policies set by the Editorial de Ciencias Médicas (ECIMED - Medical Sciences Publishing House) in Cuba. The journal publishes four issues per year, each averaging 15 articles, totaling 60 articles annually.

The discrepancy between the total number of articles published per issue and the information included in this research may be attributed to the inclusion and exclusion criteria defined in the study's methodology. The predominance of 2021 can also be linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the Cienfuegos province, which experienced a peak in cases during July and August 2021 (with over 76,276 cases reported by November 2021) [6,7]. In this regard, ECIMED issued a directive to scientific journals to prioritize articles addressing COVID-19 to enhance understanding of the novel disease [8].

Additionally, the *Finlay* journal features research on chronic NCDs, a topic that gained prominence among researchers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such context likely explains the predominance of 2021 in this study. These findings contrast with those of Vásquez-Uriarte et al [9], who reported a predominance of Peruvian scientific production on COVID-19 in 2020, totaling 87 studies. Conversely, Piñera-Castro et al. [10] found a predominance of neuroscience research in 2021, comprising 48 % of the analyzed articles. The number of signing authors contributing to articles in scientific journals depends on the number of published articles by such journals. Collaboration among authors is important for scientific advancement as it facilitates consensus and increases the number of contributors and research funding. It also supports the development of studies with broader scopes that guarantee the processing of a larger amount of data and variables. This, in turn, enhances the dissemination of knowledge within the scientific community [11]. These results differ from those reported by Valdespino-Alberti et al. [12], who analyzed scientific production between 2005 and 2016, identifying 1,201 authors.

On the other hand, the research process goes through several stages of preparation before a scientific journal considers a manuscript. In this sense, collaboration between authors can speed up the stages of data collection and processing, ensuring that a manuscript reaches the publisher in better condition [13]. This may justify the predominance of articles with more than one author and the DC. However, there is a difference compared to the findings of Ramos-Cordero et al. [14], who reported a predominance of articles with three authors. Nonetheless, both studies underscore the importance of collaboration, as they show a predominance of articles with more than one author.

The main objective of scientific journals in Cuba is to promote and disseminate the scientific achievements of each province, which has a scientific body dedicated to this purpose. In Cienfuegos, the *Finlay* journal was the pioneering body and laid the foundation for the creation of the *MediSur* journal and *Inmedsur* student scientific journal, highlighting its extensive editorial experience. These factors may explain the predominance of authors from Cienfuegos in this study, as well as the involvement of both national and international collaborators (from Peru, Ecuador, Chile and Belgium). The findings on international authors are not aligned with the results of Horta-Martínez et al. [15] and Barceló-Hidalgo et al. [16], while Vitón-Castillo et al. [17] do agree with such findings. Conversely, the research by Díaz-Rodríguez et al. [18] shows a predominance of Granma in about 23 % of the cases.

In the field of science-research, there is a constant demand of research, which must be novel and address unexplored areas of knowledge. In this respect, RAs play a crucial role by analyzing published work on a specific topic, laying the foundations for future original research (in the future, OAs) that can address these knowledge gaps. However, despite this relationship, OAs are prioritized by each scientific body according to the ECIMED guidelines [19], as their results drive scientific progress in specific topics or regions. In addition, ECIMED mandates that at least 60 % of the articles published in Cuban scientific journals must be OAs [20,21].

According to the authors, these aspects justify the predominance of OAs in this study. This aligns with the findings of Landrove-Escalona et al. [22] regarding scientific production on pharmacology in the *16 de Abril* student scientific journal, where 36.36 % were OAs. Similarly, it is consistent with previous research by Herrera Miranda et al. [23], which also reported a predominance of OAs. This indicates that the journal continues to comply with

ECIMED's editorial policies for high-quality management. Conversely, these findings differ from those of Montalvo Sánchez et al. [24], who observed a predominance of RAs.

In the case of OAs, several study types are defined, each with its own characteristics and objectives. Observational-descriptive research, compared to other types of studies (e.g., analytical, case-control), offers greater benefits to the authors, such as ease of execution, straightforward presentation of results and analysis focused on the characteristics of the object of study [19,25]. This is consistent with the study by Jiménez-Pérez et al. [26], where observational studies predominated in more than 80 % of the analyzed works.

Updating citations in published articles is an important aspect of any research. It reflects the quality of the information presented in a scientific work and the thoroughness of the review process prior to publication. However, it is also worth noting that certain topics may have limited published studies, leading to outdated information [27].

IM are short articles that address a particular pathology through an overall image, presented as a microhistory. They require fewer references, which in some cases may be omitted altogether. As a result, they tend to be more up-to-date than other articles, justifying their predominance in this study. In contrast, Díaz-Rodríguez et al. [28] reported a higher PI in OAs, which is inconsistent with the findings of the present research.

The *Finlay* journal has historically established chronic NCDs as its main topic. In this regard, it has maintained a close collaboration with the CARMEN (Conjunto de Acciones para la Reducción Multifactorial de las Enfermedades No Transmisibles - Set of Actions for the Multifactorial Reduction of Non-Communicable Diseases) project in the Cienfuegos region. This project, developed by the Pan American Health Organization, focuses on researching on chronic NCDs and reducing them by addressing their risk factors. Cienfuegos was the first province in Cuba to implement the project's second edition [29]. This collaboration explains the prevalence of articles on chronic NCDs and the high number of contributing authors from the region, establishing a clear link between both results. These findings contrast with those of Santalla-Corrales et al. [30], who reported a predominance of COVID-19 as the main topic among the analyzed articles.

The visibility and impact of a scientific journal are determined by several factors: its objective, scope, research topics and indexing in various databases. In this respect, the *Finlay* journal enjoys excellent visibility and impact, as demonstrated by its NCC, IF and h-index results. The journal is indexed in national and international databases such as SciELO, Lindex, DOAJ and Redalyc and is also included in the Web of Science Emerging Sources Citation Index [5]. These aspects justify the results obtained.

The authors acknowledge certain limitations in the study, including the lack of bibliometric indicators as productivity indices by authors and institutions. Additionally, the retrospective design of the study prevents the extrapolation of the data, so future analyses should consider newly published articles in the journal.

In conclusion, the *Finlay* journal serves as a key scientific platform for disseminating research results, with notable achievements and extensive experience in editorial management. The journal has experienced exponential growth, particularly in the number of published articles, with 2021 being the most prominent year. Its issues showcase the collaboration between national and international authors, with a strong emphasis on research from the Cienfuegos region. The topics focus on health problems that are included in the sector's priority health programs and are based on original research to a greater extent, along with a growth in citations received especially in 2017.

Author contributions: LEJ, CDDLR, YAG and BGA contributed to the conceptualization, data curation, formal data analysis, project management, writing, reviewing and editing. LEJ was responsible for the research, visualization and drafting.

Funding sources: The article was funded by the authors.

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Reception date: August 28, 2023
Evaluation date: September 22, 2023
Approval date: October 23, 2023

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