Now that the streets are back to full and masks are clogging the sewerage systems of many cities in the world; now that we can go back to boarding the underground and we can go back to the cinema; now that only at hospitals do we remember how uncomfortable masks were; and now that only our most creative students call in sick with covid, it may be time to reassess our acts as professionals, scientists, and publishers.

Of course, we all longed to ‘go back to normal’. Anything seemed better than being locked up at home, but now it is also a good time to ask if that normality was good enough to return to.

The pandemic changed almost every aspect of life. Work, education, and entertainment were radically challenged rather than adapted in a rush. Research and publishing, as profoundly human activities, were no exceptions. Along with those who were honestly trying to fight the problem with knowledge, in many disciplines just like psychology, every other researcher suddenly became a ‘Coronavirus’ expert and put their trust in the trend of getting something published fast. Almost everyone except health personnel seemed to have, at least temporarily, a bit of extra time on our hands.

Across countries, cultures, disciplines, methodologies and journals, an overwhelming number of published articles flashed “covid-19” in their titles, whether or not the article had any solutions. The urge to publish set in motion the academic version of the infodemic and the old ‘publish or perish’ became “Covid-19: write about it before you catch it”. It is also difficult not to be suspicious of the peer-review standards of some journals during this pandemic publishing frenzy.

It is true and we must acknowledge that the pandemic revealed a wide array of problems and some of them have fallen into our hands as mental health professionals. During the lockdown, with its collection of challenges, mental health resilience was brought under the spotlight, along with the threats of social isolation and the inevitable reshaping of the work/ life balance. We were also challenged by the overload of psychological problems and our inability to help people manage the infodemic in a productive manner.

As a journal, we contributed during the beginning of the pandemic and highlighted the stigma attached to mental health in our country. The theme of mental health and our need to monitor it regularly, which had remained hidden in our homes, places of work, schools, and everyday life, was finally brought into the light. The pandemic reminded us of the need to bring psychology outside the private practice office and out into the community.

However, it would be naïve to imagine that our old problems disappeared only because we stopped writing and publishing about them. What happened with everything we considered important in March 2020? It is evident that we have a new problem on our hands and that we had many good reasons to adjourn our meetings with the old ones but we have to ask ourselves if we were dedicating ourselves to solving the new problem or trying to take advantage of it. Did we contribute to solving the socio-psychological problems, or did we rush to a fashionable topic just to get published faster? There is a possibility that the pandemic caught us off balance because we have not been doing our scientific homework thoroughly. This only proves that scientific publishing, with its priorities and values, is under the influence of economic and social forces as much as any other human activity. Today’s science is evidently socially constructed and responds to economic pressure, trends, and the change of times. Pandemic publishing revealed that our science is cultural because it can be also gremial, endogamic, and colonialist.

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What can we learn from the pandemic? As the human race, we learned that we are not in good hands and that the rich and powerful will put profit before the people's well-being and use technology to hide it. Not that this is new. That as doctors and nurses were not immune to the virus, science and publishing were not immune to fads and pressure. That we may also be under forces and powers that have nothing to do with knowledge, the truth or any of those things science is supposed to play with. We fell into the new trend and that only revealed that we are not the objective and detached scientists we proclaimed ourselves to be.

Nevertheless, besides an old set of problems and a long list of new ones, we also have a few new resources, skills, and insights. We learned that we can take much better care of each other than we were told. We also confirmed that we can expand our sphere of help through telepsychology along with education and socialisation. We found increased job satisfaction through remote work and, with that, more family life, and less traffic.

Post-pandemic research means facing new topics and not pretending we have outgrown or left the old ones in the history books. We can close ranks and learn as much as we can as a scientific cooperative community or wait for the next fad to pounce on the new topic. We, scientists, see science as the form of knowledge that soars and hovers above all others. Yes, our trade is about knowledge; but what is wrong with bringing in a bit of wisdom?