

MULTIDISCIPLINE AND PERTINENCE

In several previous editorials we have made reference to the aspect of the pertinence of science. *Interciencia*, as the multidisciplinary journal that it is, admits papers with very few limitations inasmuch as the topics treated in them, which requires to evaluate with special attention the significance that each one of the manuscripts admitted and subjected to refereeing has for the progress of the societies in the region. Referees, in turn, also consider the pertinence of the work for our region, without an existing scale that specifically allows the quantification of this characteristic.

There are papers with a great pertinence despite containing conceptual or methodological elements, or an origin, that are atypical. In the current issue, for instance, we publish a work whose provenance is definitively atypical, as its authors are researchers from two Chinese universities. Furthermore, it is a study about the role of R&D cooperation in attenuating the adverse defects of the financial limitations in Chinese enterprises and with whom (suppliers, consumers or researchers) such cooperation takes place and is more, or less, effective.

The study utilizes data from an official survey of Chinese enterprises carried out by the World Bank that comprises, as do all things related to this enormous country, a very large number of firms in very diverse productive sectors. There, both product innovation and process innovation in the firms are analyzed separately. Both forms of innovation require of huge financial resources and are markedly affected by the lack of them, particularly in small enterprises and in start-up firms.

Technological innovation initiatives, whether of processes or products, have obvious relevance in the progress and development of countries, whichever the continent where there are located. The study being commented is of great pertinence for our executives, entrepreneurs and researchers for whom innovations is of primary interest and who, as in the case of the Chinese impresarios, face situations of financial limitations in order to implement their initiatives. Undoubtedly, in this part of the world we also have a lot to learn from those distant lands.

Another atypical paper that appears in this issue of *Interciencia* deals with the present and future values of the different university majors, a matter of great interest in many developed countries but that has seldom been treated in depth in our region. The transcendental decision made by every youth about the studies to follow is based on numerous factors that include vocation, highly influenced by social and cultural factors, and the vision they might have regarding their future professional performance, including income prospects and the possibilities of better living conditions.

The decisions taken by young applicants about their future careers considering the economic performance along their professional life cycle is certainly pertinent and of great relevance. This justifies and gives value to the knowledge and use of econometric techniques to obtain the net present value and the internal rate of return for different areas of university studies, which is carried out in this study for the case of Chilean professionals.

The results obtained by the author of the paper reveal the great differences in the economic return in Chile for the different university careers and the fact that students select a given career at admission based on its present value and not on the future outlook that it offers them. It is the present value, together with preferences that are always influenced by cultural values, what determines the decisions of high school graduates applying to pursue university studies.

The pertinence of studies as those referred to above is not less than that of the utilization of alternative energy sources, such as that from the sea, considered in another paper included in the current issue, or of basic studies about our nature, such as the examination of the existing relation between dimensions of the flowers and the bees that disperse its pollen and insure the perpetuation of the species.

MIGUEL LAUFER
Editor