

Publishing Scientific Papers Based on Master's and Ph.D. Theses from a Small Scientific Community: Case Study of Croatian Medical Schools

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Aim. To evaluate publishing activity of medical doctors after they have obtained Master's or Ph.D. degree at the Rijeka and Zagreb University Schools of Medicine in Croatia, and establish the number of journal articles based on these theses.

Methods. Data on Master's and Ph.D. theses defended at the Rijeka and Zagreb University Schools of Medicine in the 1990-1999 period were collected by hand-search of the archive. MEDLINE and Current Contents databases were searched for journal articles resulting from the theses.

Results. During the 10-year period, 1,535 Master's and 634 Ph.D. theses were defended at the Rijeka and Zagreb University Schools of Medicine (253 Master's and 138 Ph.D. theses from Rijeka and 1,282 Master's and 496 Ph.D. theses from Zagreb). There were 201 (14%) Master's and 218 (34%) Ph.D. theses that resulted in articles published in journals indexed in MEDLINE (13% of Master's and 11% of Ph.D. theses from Rijeka, and 14% of Master's and 41% of Ph.D. theses from Zagreb). Also, 97 (6%) Master's and 129 (20%) Ph.D. theses that resulted in articles published in Current Contents journals (8% of Master's and 6% of Ph.D. theses from Rijeka, and 6% of Master's and 24% of Ph.D. theses from Zagreb). There was no significant difference between the two Universities with respect to published articles based on Master's theses, but there were significantly more articles from Ph.D. theses in Zagreb ($p < 0.001$). Most of the theses resulted in a single publication (95%), 19 (5%) in 2, and 2 in 3 publications. Out of all 453 journal articles, 31% were published in Croatian and 69% in international journals.

Conclusion. Most Croatian Master's and Ph.D. theses are not made available to the scientific community. There should be more institutional effort directed at the stimulation of postgraduate students to publish their scientific work.

Key words: Croatia; dissertations, academic; education, medical; publication; publishing; schools, medical; universities