

REPLY TO THE OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE ARTICLE "THE VEILED THREAT TO OPEN ACCESS DIAMANTE"¹

Lúcia da Silveira

luciadasilveiras@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1118-2121>

1

Isabel Abedrapo Rosen

isa.abedrapo@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9990-0436>

-0436

Nanci Oddone

neoddone@gmail.com

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0086-5253>

2-0086-5253

Nivaldo Calixto Ribeiro

zoopas@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0650-0121>

1

Jorge Polanco-Cortés

jorge.polanco@ucr.ac.cr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2974-5167>

-5167

Priscila Machado

Borges Sena

priscilasena@ibict.br

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5612-4315>

02-5612-4315

Dagoberto Salas

dago.salas@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2550-3435>

5

Carlos Ruz Fuenzalida

carlosruiz@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5568-4225>

-4225

Francisco Silva-Garcés

fsilva@openlab.ec

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2635-1293>

02-2635-1293

Liana Penabad-Camacho

liana.penabad.camacho@una.ac.cr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9381-182X>

X

Juliana Fachin

juliana.fachin@ichca.ufal.br

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0883-642X>

-642X

Josimara Dias Brumatti

josimaradias@id.uff.br

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7199-2404>

01-7199-2404

Saray Córdoba González

saraycg@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2906-8431>

1

Julio Santillan-Aldana

julio.santillan@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1906-2370>

-2370

Kizi Mendonça de

Araújo

kizi.araujo@fiocruz.br

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9378-3299>

02-9378-3299

Rosario Rogel-Salazar

rrogels@uaemex.mx

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6018-0635>

5

Rinaldo Vidal Silva

rvidal@ucn.cl

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4097-9482>

-9482

Brian Rosenblum

brianrosenblum@ku.edu

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2973-8901>

02-2973-8901

**Martin Adalberto Tena Espinoza de
los Monteros**

mtenaespinosa@academicos.udg.mx

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5435-773X>

X

Liliana Andrea Sánchez

lsalasandreas@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1886-255X>

-255X

REPLY

With the aim of contributing to an informed and responsible debate, we present this collective response to the "Official response to the article 'The veiled threat to diamond open access'" by Halevi et al. (2025), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60144/v6i.2025.153>, published on 08/14/2025. Our intention is to

¹ Translation from Spanish into English: Rosario Rogel-Salazar and Brian Rosenblum.

refocus the debate on what we identify, as scholars coming from diverse disciplinary, institutional, and national contexts, as the core of the problem: the systemic effects produced by the exposure and circulation of APC estimates in the publishing ecosystem, particularly on diamond journals and bibliodiversity in the Global South, regardless of the technical merits of the proposed model. The signatories, representing a wide range of publishing and academic backgrounds, share this concern based on our specific experiences.

We reaffirm the scope and nature of our original text, Silveira *et al.* (2025), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60144/v6i.2025.152>, published on 07/21/2025. With this in mind, and maintaining our commitment to plurality of views and transparency, we would like to clarify the following points:

1) Nature of publishing in *Ciência da Informação Express* (point 1)

We agree that this text was not conceived as a scientific research article, but rather as a collective critique by authors from eight different countries, not of Halevi's article or any other cited in our text, but of SCImago's action of publicly exposing this metric universally for all journals. We recognize that its placement in an opinion section is more consistent with its nature.

That said, it is possible to see on the journal's platform that the article has already been relocated to the opinion section, indicating that its purpose is to present a personal or critical perspective on the topic at hand. This classification underscores the authors' intention to approach the topic from a reflective and subjective point of view, inviting readers to consider the arguments presented.

2) Methodology and "erroneous association with the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) indicator" (points 2, 3, and 4)

In our article (Silveira *et al.* 2025), we cite to Halevi *et al.* (2024) to document the tendency for APCs to be higher in higher-impact journals (Figure 1). The literature review in that article states that "higher-quality journals tend to charge higher APCs" (Halevi *et al.*, 2024, p. 2-3). This is in line with previous

studies linking quality indicators—such as JIF and SJR—to publication costs.

Figure 1: Screenshot of citations to Halevi *et al.* (2024) added in the work of Silveira *et al.* (2025)

Studies by Halevi *et al.* (2024), Björk and Solomon (2015), and Guerrero-Bote and Moya-Anegón (2012) show that journals with higher impact factors tend to charge higher APCs. This practice has been actively promoted by indexing databases, which associate the potential for APCs with citation-based metrics, even in open access journals that do not currently charge publication fees. (Halevi *et al.*, 2024).

Haustein *et al.* (2024) describe how the practice of charging APCs has grown, as well as the problem of the lack of transparency and justification of the amounts charged in APC fees by journals (Borrego, 2023; Halevi *et al.*, 2024). The market has appropriated the open access model, generating negative consequences for the entire scientific community.

Source: Silveira *et al.* (2025).

Our text does not assert a causal relationship or attribute normative intent to the study by Halevi *et al.* (2024); the citation is used solely to document a widely discussed trend in the literature. The interpretive divergence that emerges in this exchange is illustrative of the margins of ambiguity that arise when technical decisions are integrated into widely used evaluation platforms.

It is relevant to note that, in response to a query from one of our authors, an email dated April 24, 2025 was received from an associate director of the SCImago research group, explicitly stating that the methodology used by SCImago for estimating APC was based on the study by Halevi *et al.* (2024). In fact, this communication even provided a link to the article mentioned as a reference.

Despite having this information, we chose not to use it as evidence in our article to directly link their study to SCImago's change in methodology, preferring instead to focus on the implications of APC data visualization on the platform. Additionally, readers' first contact with the article by Halevi *et al.* (2024) was the link placed in the "Journal value" section of SJR and associated with the caption "Methodology: Estimating the financial value of scientific journals and APCs using visibility factors: A new methodological

approach data for 2020-2024 period" (at: <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalvalue.php>). This link led directly to the article-and still appears on the website today-although it no longer offers access to the text (the page does not load). The full text remains available at: <https://revista.profesionaldelainformacion.com/index.php/EPI/article/view/87843>

Even from the perspective of a non-specialist user, all these elements reinforce a reading of continuity between the model proposed in Halevi *et al.* (2024) and its implementation on the platform. This is not an overinterpretation; the evidence makes it clear.

3) On ethics and transparency

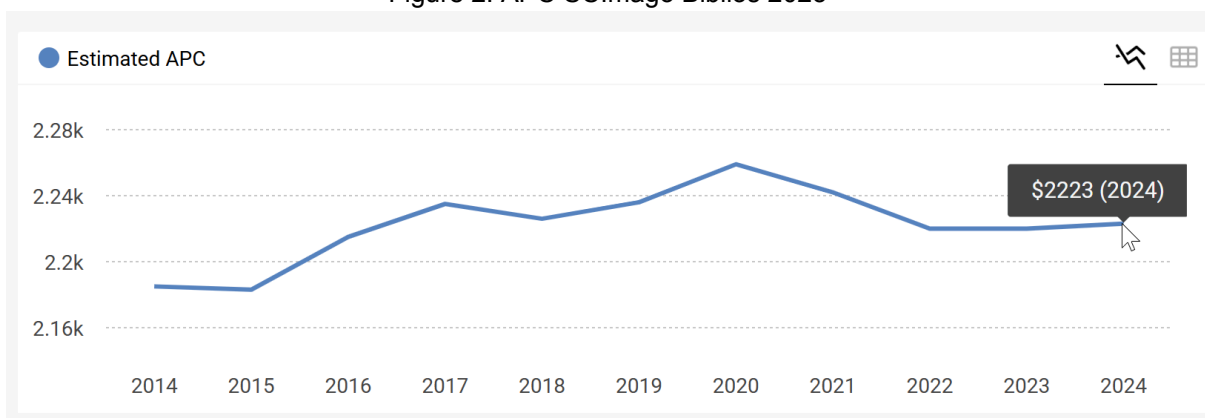
Point 5 of the response states that, to increase transparency, the SCImago portal will identify diamond journals more clearly. However, the way this measure is currently applied—such as adding only a small diamond icon next to the journal's name (see, for example, the *Educare Electronic Journal*: , <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalsearch.php?q=21100856604&tip=sid&exact=no>) - does not solve the central problem. As long as the APC chart continues to display cost estimates for journals that do not charge fees, the platform maintains and reinforces a commercial, pay-based logic. This, in turn, can lead to misinterpretations and potentially generate misinformation among authors, readers, and publishers who rely on this tool to make informed decisions. A truly effective solution would require the graph itself to explicitly indicate the actual cost as US\$0, since any less direct indication tends to be insufficient to neutralize market bias - a concern supported by the experiences of publishers, reviewers, and researchers involved in diamond journals and scientific evaluation systems in Latin America.

4) Support for ethical and transparent publishing

We agree with what is proposed in point 5: the defense of equitable and transparent models of academic communication. In accordance with the principles of open science, and in the interest of transparency and informed

public debate, we consider it necessary for SCImago to issue a public clarification—technically grounded and contextualized – to help reduce confusion and prevent misinterpretation. This is especially important for users who may be unfamiliar with the meaning of APC (Article Processing Charges) data in the tool, such as editors, researchers, or readers. For example, journals without APCs, such as *Biblios*, appear with an estimated APC value of \$2,223, despite not charging any fees. Given that many authors use this tool to decide where to submit their work, the question inevitably arises: why is information that does not correct reality being included?

Figure 2: APC SCImago Biblios 2025



Screenshot taken on July 31, 2025 (reviewed on January 15, 2026) from the SCImago Journal & Country Rank portal, corresponding to *Biblios* (ISSN: 1562-4730), available at: <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalsearch.php?q=21100373617&tip=sid&clean=0>. This page shows an estimated APC value of USD 2,223, even though the journal operates under the diamond model and does not charge any fees for article processing.

This is the central issue we address in our text, and we have been waiting for SCImago to take a clear position on the matter by publicly providing the necessary technical background information. Such clarification would help reduce the current confusion and avoid the risks it may generate, including those mentioned above.

We reiterate that our intention has been to contribute to a collective reflection on the implications of these practices, and we value the opportunity to continue this exchange in an open, respectful, and collaborative framework.

5) Valor econômico

As can be seen in the original text (figure 3), the association between economic estimates and visibility is not introduced by our analysis, but by the platform itself.

Figure 3

6. Clarifying financial implications

We do not equate financial value with editorial quality. Our estimations of APC values are intended as transparency tools, not judgments. Many high-APC journals offer little visibility or impact, and we believe exposing this misalignment is key to creating a more equitable and efficient publishing ecosystem. The manifesto does not engage with this argument, which we believe is central to the ongoing reform of the system.

Source: Halevi et al. (2025).

6) Ideological choices

We have not linked the text by Halevi *et al.* 2024 to ideological positions (Figure 1) as stated in Figure 4. Far from denying its ideological dimension, we assume that all scientific evaluation infrastructure incorporates normative assumptions. In this case, these assumptions are reflected in the fundamental difference between the defense of common goods and their commodification, a difference that is inevitably defined from a political and ideological standpoint.

Figura 4

7. On Ideological positions

We do not engage in ideological or political debates over models like “cognitive capitalism.” These are important philosophical and policy discussions, but they do not belong in critiques of empirical, methodological research. Our focus is on providing robust, data-driven tools to inform decisions made by policymakers, authors, and institutions.

Source: Halevi et al. (2025).

7) Ethical debate

We agree with the ethical debate. We believe that our criticism was misinterpreted: it was not directed at the article in question, but at SCImago.

Figura 5

8. Call for responsible engagement

We reiterate our full commitment to open science, bibliodiversity, and transparent publishing practices. We welcome critique, but only when it engages accurately and constructively with our work. Mischaracterizing our research, by conflating it with SJR, or ignoring its empirical basis, does not serve the goals of equity, accountability, or open access.

Source: Halevi et al. (2025).

Conclusions

We reaffirm that the controversy surrounding the estimation of APCs cannot be reduced to a dichotomy between "science" and "manifesto," or between "technical neutrality" and "political position." What is fundamentally at stake is the way in which scientific information systems, by incorporating new parameters, can generate distributive and symbolic effects across different publishing models, especially on diamond open access.

In this context, it is essential to recognize that scientific information infrastructures do not operate in a technical vacuum, but actively shape the dynamics of evaluation, visibility, and legitimization of knowledge. The publication of APC estimates in journals that do not charge actual fees can contribute to misinterpretations and the reproduction of structural inequalities, particularly in peripheral or semi-peripheral regions, where the diamond model is a crucial strategy for equity and publishing sustainability.

From this perspective, the discussion raised here is not limited to a specific interpretative disagreement. Instead, it points to the need to critically examine how data and metrics circulate, how they are presented, and how they acquire meaning within the scientific communication ecosystem, as well as the effects they have on publishing practices across diverse contexts.

REFERENCES

HALEVI, Gali et al. Estimating the financial value of scientific journals and APCs using visibility factors: A new methodological approach. *El Profesional de la información*, Madrid, v. 33, n. 5, e330512, 2024. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0512>. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/387819459_Estimating_the_financial_value_of_scientific_journals_and_APCs_using_visibility_factors_A_new_methodological_approach. Accessed on: 29 jan. 2026.

HALEVI, Gali *et al.* Official response to the article "The veiled threat to diamond open access" published in the journal *Ciência da Informação Express*. **Ciência da Informação Express**, Lavras, MG, v. 6, p. 1–3, 2025. DOI: 10.60144/v6i.2025.153. Available at: <https://cienciadainformacaoexpress.ufla.br/index.php/revista/article/view/153>. Accessed on: Oct. 3, 2025.

SILVEIRA, Lucia da *et al.* Veiled threat to diamond open access: when indicators become weapons of exclusion. **Ciência da Informação Express**, Lavras, MG, v. 6, p. 1–12, 2025. DOI: 10.60144/v6i.2025.152. Available at: <https://cienciadainformacaoexpress.ufla.br/index.php/revista/article/view/152>. Accessed on: Oct. 3, 2025.