

EDITORIAL STANDARDS FOR INFORMATION POLICIES IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION IN INFORMATION SCIENCE JOURNALS

Normas editoriais para las políticas de información en la Divulgación Científica en las revistas de Ciencia de la Información

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This is a preliminary study on the existence of editorial standards that include Information Policies in Science Communication in Information Science journals. Its objectives are to look for signs of Information Policies in Science Communication in the editorial policy sections of Information Science stratum A journals, which have the intention of democratizing science, to verify the existence of information actions in science communication in the digital social networks linked to each journal selected in this study, and propose guidelines for information policies in Science communication in scientific journals in the context of Information Science.

Method: It uses the indicative method for data collection and analysis, has a qualitative approach, and the research sample includes scientific journals in the field of Information Science, in open access, and in Portuguese, Brazilian, stratum A, and mother area in Communication and Information, according to Qualis Periódicos Capes (Quadriênio 2017-2020). **Results:** 16 journals were identified, only 7 have networks, and none of them describe Scientific Dissemination in their editorial standards. It emphasizes the need to expand information policies in Science Communication in the field of Information. **Conclusions:** The initial stage of the research points to the need for further study and expansion in future research, in order to assess the configuration of the editorial standards of journals in Information Science, as well as pointing out the importance of information policies in science communication for the democratization of science in line with open and citizen science.

Keywords: Information Policies. Science Communication. Scientific journal. Open Access. Access to information.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Este es un estudio preliminar sobre la existencia de normas editoriales que incluyen políticas de información en la comunicación científica en revistas de ciencias de la información. Sus objetivos son buscar indicios de políticas de información en la comunicación científica en las secciones de política editorial de las revistas de estrato A de Ciencias de la Información, que tienen la intención de democratizar la ciencia, verificar la existencia de acciones de información en la comunicación científica en las redes sociales digitales vinculadas a cada revista seleccionada en este estudio y proponer directrices para las políticas de información en la comunicación científica en revistas científicas en el contexto de las Ciencias de la Información. **Método:** Se utiliza el método indicativo para la recopilación y el análisis de datos, con un enfoque cualitativo, y la muestra de la investigación incluye revistas científicas del ámbito de la ciencia de la información, de acceso abierto, en portugués brasileño, estrato A y área madre en Comunicación e Información, según Qualis Periódicos Capes (Cuadrenio 2017-2020). **Resultados:** Se identificaron 16 revistas, solo 7 tienen redes y ninguna de ellas describe la divulgación científica en sus normas editoriales. Se destaca la necesidad de ampliar las políticas de información en la comunicación científica en el campo de la información. **Conclusiones:** La etapa inicial de la investigación apunta a la necesidad de seguir estudiando y ampliando la investigación en el futuro, con el fin de evaluar la configuración de las normas editoriales de las revistas en Ciencias de la Información, así como señalar la importancia de las políticas de información en la comunicación científica para la democratización de la ciencia en línea con la ciencia abierta y ciudadana.

Palabras clave: Políticas de información. Divulgación científica. Revista científica. Acceso abierto. Acceso a la información.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the Science Communication ecosystem, specifically in the editorial standards adopted by open access scientific journals, the information policies presented in the editorial policy sections are fundamental to understanding the informational actions developed by the journal.

In this sense, Pinheiro (2012) emphasizes that information policies guide the stages of production, systematization, processing, storage, transportation, distribution, search, use, and destruction of information. In short, information policies developed and made available in scientific journals, in a clear and concise manner, are essential to ensure good research practices, such as ethics, transparency in editorial processes, and scientific integrity. Thus, information policies not only ensure

that researchers follow strict ethical guidelines, but also promote trust and credibility in scientific communication, which contributes to the quality and validity of published research.

For Meadows (1999), a scientific journal is a collection of scientific articles written by different authors, through which peers evaluate the conformity of the methods adopted to understand a particular phenomenon or social problem. For the author, since the 17th century, journals have been one of the main forms of formal communication established in modern science.

[...] this source of information has the dual function of communicating information among peers within the scientific community and to the general public. To this day, the journal is considered one of the most important sources of information for the Science Archive and the scientific community as a whole. (Gallotti, 2017, p. 36).

Scientific journals play an important role in promoting and disseminating knowledge among experts and society. Science communication seeks to make this knowledge accessible through simplified language, using different formats, such as interviews, news articles, television series, and social media, providing an opportunity to develop critical thinking in society.

This study seeks to identify evidence of information policies in Science Communication in Information Science journals. It uses a qualitative method based on the inductive paradigm to collect and analyze data. The sample includes Brazilian open-access journals in Portuguese, classified as stratum A in the area of Communication and Information, according to Qualis Periódicos Capes (2017-2020).

The research is justified by the investigation into the Brazilian editorial standard in recognizing the importance of science communication through scientific journals and its contribution to the democratization of S&T, especially in discussions concerning Open Access and Citizen Science practices in the reality of the main scientific communication medium, which is the scientific journal.

2 INFORMATION POLICY, SCIENCE COMMUNICATION, AND DIGITAL SOCIAL NETWORKS

In contemporary society, a new space for information production and communication has emerged and it can act in partnership with scientific journals: digital social networks. These networks are emerging virtual spaces conducive to the practice of users' infocommunication skills in the scientific context, as they present innovative mechanisms for the generation, organization, and communication of information, and can contribute to making science more accessible by breaking down the walls of academia, especially in the context of the information society.

For Borges (2018, p. 125, our translation), information and communication skills can be understood as “[...] the convergence of knowledge (knowing), skills (knowing how to do) and attitudes (knowing how to be) that one wishes to develop in relation to information and communication throughout a process of information literacy.”

Digital information and communication technologies are present in the contemporary scenario, especially in the process of information communication. Scientific journals adopt such technologies to optimize the flow of information and can also use them to expand their social reach. Among them, digital social networks stand out, which have been gaining ground in scientific communication and dissemination, connecting scientific peers and society, and strengthening the dissemination of knowledge in science and technology.

Table 1 below shows the conceptual framework adopted for understanding the concepts used in this proposal.

Table 1 – Conceptual framework of the research

Term	Concept/authorship
Open access	Making academic or scientific literature available on the internet, allowing any user to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or reference the full text of documents (Fiocruz, 2024, our translation).
Scientific communication	Dissemination of scientific information among peers, with the aim of making known to the scientific community the advances made in specific areas or the development of new theories or refinement of existing ones (Bueno, 2010, our translation).



Science Communication	Promotion of science communication actions in communication: the sender, scientists, who need to communicate their research in language that is adapted and easy to assimilate and understand so that society, composed of the non-specialized public, can learn about their work, value it, and recognize it, as well as other sectors that make up society (Massarani; Dias, 2018, our translation).
Information policy	It encompasses laws and regulations that deal with any stage of the information production chain, from its creation, processing (natural or artificial), storage, transportation, distribution, search, use, and destruction (Pinheiro, 2012, our translation).
Digital social networks	Set of actors, relationships, and interactions established in virtual networks composed of people, social groups, entities, devices, and artifacts for the purpose of sharing information and promoting communication between subjects (Recuero, 2009; Santaella; Lemos, 2010, our translation).
Information regime	The dominant mode of information production in a social formation, which defines who the subjects, organizations, rules, and information authorities are, as well as the standards of excellence and models of their organization, interaction, and distribution, prevailing at a certain time, place, and circumstance, according to certain cultural possibilities and certain power relations (González de Gómez, 2003, our translation).

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Understanding the conceptual network described above allows us to reflect on the need for information policies aimed at science communication in open access scientific journals in Brazil in the field of Information Science. Such policies are fundamental for stimulating an editorial culture within the context of open access and the democratization of science.

Science Communication aims, in summary, to enable the communication of scientific research to the general public. Such communication requires prior adaptation by the researcher to transform technical language into simple language that prioritizes informing society about a subject of relevance to public understanding. This idea is in line with Bueno (2019) in that science communication effectively contributes to the democratization of scientific knowledge by promoting scientific literacy. The essence of science communication is to democratize access to scientific

knowledge and establish the ideal conditions for developing scientific competence in society.

When developing the concept of science communication, it is understood that its relationship with information policies, defined by Freire (2020) as a set of guidelines and actions that regulate the production, distribution, and use of information in an organization or society, converges toward the creation of guidelines that favor actions and methods for disseminating scientific knowledge in specific contexts, such as scientific journals.

According to Braman (2006), information policy plays a fundamental role in understanding informational power in the world. The author defines information policy as the set of laws, regulations, and practices that govern the production, processing, storage, distribution, and use of information, and argues that all these stages are fundamental in shaping the flow of information in society, reflecting on economic, cultural, and social aspects. In this same perspective, González de Gómez considers that information policy

[...] consists of laws, regulations, and doctrinal positions – as well as other decisions and practices with constitutive effects on society as a whole – that involve the generation, processing, flow, access, and use of information. [...] it is the policy relating to any stage of an information production chain, from creation, through processing, to storage or destruction (González de Gómez, 2015, p. 324, our translation).

Silva and Freire (2024) highlight that information policies are essential for identifying gaps in organizational processes, which, in turn, contributes significantly to the continuous improvement of these processes.

In addition, such policies play an important role in strengthening the informational actions developed by social actors, promoting more efficient and effective information management. The implementation of robust information policies allows social organizations not only to identify and correct deficiencies, but also to enhance the dissemination of knowledge, fostering an environment of transparency and collaboration within organizations.

In scientific journals, science communication plays an important role, enabling scientific publishers not only to comply with good research practices, but also to

focus, in their editorial standards, on breaking down the walls of academia, taking scientific information beyond traditional scientific communication environments, encouraging the scientific community to adapt their texts into science communication materials, democratizing scientific knowledge, and bringing this knowledge to society as a whole.

Science communication materials come in different formats, depending on the channel/medium of communication or the technological resource used. They can range from adapted oral communications, videos, events, podcasts, or other formats in which researchers can adapt their research for easy-to-understand communication, which aims to inform society about scientific content in an uncomplicated way.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a preliminary study, and the object of the research focuses on scientific journals that have one or more active digital social networks. This paper presents the following research question: do open access scientific journals in the field of Information Science in Brazil have information policies aimed at Science communication and invest in actions on digital social networks?

Its objectives are: a) to search for evidence, in the editorial policy sections of scientific journals in the field of Information Science, stratum A, of information policies on Science communication with the intention of democratizing science; b) to verify the existence of information actions in Science communication on digital social networks linked to these journals, and c) to propose guidelines for information policies in Science communication in journals in the context of Information Science.

The research sample includes open access scientific journals in the field of Information Science, in Portuguese, Brazilian, stratum A, and with a parent area in Communication and Information, according to Qualis Periódicos CAPES (2017-2020 quadrennium).

It adopts the inductive method to search for “clues” on the websites of selected scientific journals that may answer the above research question. The inductive method aims to “[...] survey the structure and movements of the set to be analyzed”

and is adopted as a possibility to find new discoveries and approach the empirical (Costa; Dornelles, 2011).

The indexical paradigm is proposed by Ginzburg (1989) with the premise of searching for “clues” or discoveries in informational sources, physical or digital documentation, in order to analyze data that, in principle, had no value or relevance, but which, from a certain research perspective, acquires a new value, be it social, political, and/or economic to society. This method contributes to problem solving from a philosophical, applied, and/or sociological perspective.

Table 2 below shows the research sample, with profiles active on one or more digital social networks.

Table 2 – List of selected scientific journals

Title of the scientific journal	ISSN	Ranking	Digital social media presence	Describe an Information Policy on Science Communication?
TransInformação	0103-3786 (printed)/ 2318-0889 (electronic)	A1	Yes	No
Em Questão	1807-8893 (printed)/ 1808-5245 (electronic)	A2	Yes	No
Encontros Bibli (EB)	1518-2924 (electronic)	A2	Yes	No
Perspectivas em Ciência da Informação	1413-9936 (printed)/ 1981-5344 (electronic)	A2	Yes	No
InCID: Revista de Ciência da Informação e Documentação	2178-2075 (electronic)	A3	Yes	No
Revista Digital de Biblioteconomia e Ciência da Informação	1678-765X	A3	Yes	No
AtoZ: novas práticas em informação e conhecimento	2237-826X	A4	Yes	No

Source: Plataforma Sucupira (2024).

The research sample consisted of seven (7) journals with active profiles on digital communication platforms, and none of them had a science communication information policy on their websites.

Data collection was carried out in June and July 2024, observing data from the Sucupira Platform and from each website and publication related to science communication on the digital social networks of the scientific journals that make up the research sample. The analysis of content using language specific to scientific communication was not included in the digital social networks of each journal. Publications that conveyed the idea and consistency of the elements that comprise science communication, i.e., being expressed in simple language with the intention of disseminating information to society in general, were analyzed and considered relevant to the object of study.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Open access scientific journals play a significant role in democratizing access to scientific and technological information in the country. Similarly, well-established and clearly defined information policies enhance the reach and relevance of scientific journals for scientific communication and science communication to the scientific community and society in general.

Of the total of 16 (sixteen) scientific journals selected, 7 (seven) have active social networks on digital platforms. The journals' profiles use the platforms to promote published scientific articles and announce new issues.

The existence of science communication actions was verified, most of which were related to written and/or audiovisual materials with simplified content from the journal's publications. Strategies such as the publication of excerpts from articles, podcasts, and videos recorded by authors referring to their submissions to the journal were identified. However, the journals selected for the sample do not explicitly describe an information policy focused on science communication in their editorial policies section.

A period of discontinuity was also observed in some profiles between the dates of publication of new content, which suggests the absence of a pattern. There

is no specification on the websites of each selected scientific journal regarding how science communication activities are carried out on the digital social networks of each journal.

The specification of an information policy on Science Communication could benefit the team that operates the digital social networks. Established standards regarding form, content, type of language, type of use of graphics and/or media, audio resources, and the inclusion of accessibility policies in science communication actions can enhance, build loyalty, and lend credibility to the scientific content disseminated on digital social networks through scientific journals.

The presence of an information policy on science communication expressed through clear guidelines could help researchers in the field adapt their scientific communication texts, in an effort to popularize them to society, into texts adapted for science communication.

In this sense, this science communication material could reach various sectors of society, given that the frontiers of cyberspace and digital social networks are immeasurable. In this way, the author would gain not only visibility, but also recognition and social appreciation for the work developed in the scientific field.

Science communication, through simple language, would give society the opportunity to become aware of the existence of studies and their impacts. Such information would add value to the development of citizens' informational and scientific skills.

Thus, the following section proposes some guidelines for information policies in science communication, in the context of Information Science, in order to serve as a possible model to be implemented. These policies aim to increase science communication actions in their journals and, consequently, contribute to a more collaborative and citizen-oriented scientific culture, with the intention of reaching not only the scientific community, but also society as a whole and the productive sectors.

5 GUIDELINES FOR INFORMATION POLICIES IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Editorial standards in scientific journals serve as guidelines for authors, establishing rules that contribute to the improvement and optimization of the scientific

communication process, emphasizing credibility, reliability, accuracy, scientific rigor, integrity, and ethics in research.

Given this, after noting the absence of editorial standards that favor science communication in scientific journals in the field of Information Science, it is proposed below that some guidelines for the construction of an information policy on science communication.

As previously presented, such policies contribute not only to the visibility of the journal, but also to the recognition and appreciation of science and scientists, and to the fulfillment of the social function of both, acting as a facilitator of access to information in science and technology and its appropriation for the information society.

Table 3 below describes the proposed guidelines for information policies in science communication in Information Science, based on the development of research.

Table 3 – Guidelines for information policies in science communication

1	In addition to the scientific communication manuscript, submit science communication material with adapted and accessible language. Scientific editors can suggest the most appropriate format and provide templates for its creation. Examples include explanatory videos with accessible language for a diverse audience, podcasts on the subject of study, online events, and other formats that prioritize clarity and conciseness in the transmission of scientific and technological information.
2	Comply with the specifications of the publishers and the journal regarding format, timing, and rules for the preparation of science communication material.
3	The scientific journal must provide information on its website about the team responsible for maintaining and managing the journal's science communication channel(s), so that authors can easily identify and contact them whenever possible.
4	The team responsible for the science communication channel(s) of the scientific journal must describe the current science communication actions, as well as inform the frequency of publication of such posts, valuing the continuous process of such actions.
5	The scientific journal must have contributors who can interact with internet users on science communication channels. In the case of online events, the journal must ensure that there is a person responsible for managing

	comments or simultaneous chat communication.
6	Notes or stamps can be added to the scientific communication text display page on the journal interface to indicate the existence of science communication materials. Stamps can serve as an incentive, demonstrating that the author was concerned with adapting their material for science communication, which allows society to access and understand scientific content.
7	Encourage authors to provide their own channel or email address so that Internet users can contact them with questions, concerns, or suggestions.
8	Specify the need for authors to include captions, self-descriptive texts, and other resources for inclusion and accessibility in science communication materials. Scientific journals that have science communication channels should also be responsible for increasing inclusion and accessibility resources in published content.
9	Create other types of publications for science communication that do not require scientific communication texts, attracting new authors such as communicators, producers, journalists, and science communicators to publish science communication materials in the journal.
10	Encourage the internationalization of content published in the journal by adapting content posted on science communication into other languages, establishing partnerships with collaborators and scientific peers in other regions, and making the reach index of content on science communication available, as is the case with scientific communication texts.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The guidelines emphasize the importance of scientific publishers meeting contemporary demands related to public understanding of science, especially in the current scenario, considering the challenges posed by scientific denialism, misinformation, fake news, and post-truth. From this perspective, information policies in science communication can help meet society's need for quality, certified, and verified scientific information. The appropriation of scientific and technological knowledge enables conscious decision-making, making citizens critical, with refined informational and scientific skills, contributing to economic, cultural, and social development.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This paper presents preliminary research aimed at finding evidence, using the inductive method, of information policies in science communication in scientific journals in Information Science, stratum A, according to the 2017-2020 Quadrennium classification table of Qualis Periódicos CAPES, in open access and in Portuguese in the Brazilian context.

The existence of science communication actions was verified in the profiles linked to each scientific journal in the context of digital social networks. Most of these are texts and audiovisual materials with simplified language for public understanding of scientific publications. However, in the search carried out on the websites of the journals that make up the research sample, no information policies on science communication were explicitly identified. After confirming the absence of information policies on science communication in the selected journals, a discussion was held on the relevance of these policies in editorial standards. Guidelines were then presented that can assist scientific editors in developing information policies focused on science communication.

This initial stage of the research indicates the need to deepen and expand future research to understand how Brazilian publishing standards are positioned in relation to the creation and implementation of information policies aimed at science communication. It is hoped that the next stages of the research will mature the investigation into the gaps in editorial policies for science communication and even add a comparative analysis with other scenarios, such as expanding the research to other countries, with a chapter on Latin America and other regions. These stages have not been completed at this time, representing a limitation of the present study, but will be developed in future research.

Finally, it is envisaged that information policies on science communication should focus on the democratization of science in line with open science, citizen science, and greater recognition of civil society in the public, private, and university spheres.

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