

OPEN ACCESS IN INFORMATION SCIENCE: ANALYSIS OF CONTINUOUSLY PUBLISHED JOURNALS INDEXED IN DOAJ

Open access in Information Science: analysis of continuously published journals indexed in the DOAJ.

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ABSTRACT

Objective: this article analyzes the adoption of the continuous publication system by Brazilian Information Science journals indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), within the context of open access. **Methodology:** characterized as an exploratory, descriptive, and qualitative study, the research identifies the journals operating under this model and examines trends in this editorial practice.

Results: as of May 28, 2024, the DOAJ listed 20,438 journals, of which 23 were identified under the term "Science Information." The results show that 17 of these journals have adopted the continuous publication system, while 6 still follow traditional publishing models. **Final Considerations:** the analysis points to a growing trend in the adoption of continuous publication in Brazil, reflecting changes in editorial practices and the dynamics of scientific communication. The study contributes to the discussion on the advantages and challenges of this model, as well as its impact on knowledge dissemination.

keywords: Information Science. Scientific magazines. Rolling Pass.

1 INTRODUCTION

The movement for open access has transformed scientific communication, promoting greater democratization of knowledge and agility in the dissemination of research. In the field of Information Science, this movement gains prominence, especially with the adoption of innovative models, such as the continuous publication system.

Originating in Europe and now gaining ground in the Americas, the Continuous Publication model (also known as Rolling Pass) is revolutionizing the way academic journals operate. This method stands out for publishing articles in a single volume, without periodic interruptions or the need to wait for an issue to close to release new content. By eliminating delays, this approach prevents the reduction of article visibility and expands its impact in terms of consultations and citations. Recognizing the growing importance of this model, SciELO (SciELO, 2018) produced a Guide to Continuous Publication, defining it as:

[...] the innovative possibility of continuous publication of articles without the need to wait for the complete composition of fascicles or serial editions. This modality promotes speed in the communication process and the availability of research with numerous advantages for users of scientific information: researchers, students, readers, editors, and funding agencies. (SciELO, 2018, p. 3).

The main objective of adopting the Continuous Publication system is to minimize the time between the acceptance of an article and its publication, a challenge aggravated by the high volume of submissions received by journals. Furthermore, this model seeks to increase the visibility and access to peer-reviewed articles, which undergo editing, formatting, and receive validated Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs), ensuring their continuous and timely dissemination.

As highlighted by Campos (2018), this model offers authors greater agility in the publication of their work, while allowing the scientific community to follow the most recent discoveries quickly. Continuous Publication is gradually replacing the Ahead of Print (AOP) model, also known as “Advanced Article Publication” (PAA), which allows the individual publication of approved and edited articles before their inclusion in a complete issue. What differentiates the continuous publication article from Ahead of Print (AOP)? SciELO clarifies this distinction as follows:

Both documents represent articles that are already finalized; however, the AOP does not yet integrate a fascicle and, therefore, does not have the volume, number, pagination, date, and section information and will be included in a fascicle later. The continuous publication article, on the other hand, has all the fascicle composition information, does not have conventional pagination, but rather an electronic identifier (e-location id). The main characteristic of using these modalities is that AOP meets the needs of journals that still publish in print and need to continue using sequential pagination of articles, while the continuous publication modality is essentially aimed at journals that only publish in the online version. (Campos, 2018, p.1).

This article seeks to investigate the landscape of Information Science journals in Brazil regarding the adoption of the Continuous Publication system. By analyzing the prevalence and implementation of this model, the study aims to elucidate its advantages, challenges, and impact on the dissemination of scientific knowledge in the field of Information Science. Furthermore, it explores how this model aligns with global trends in open access and scientific communication, offering insights into its potential to transform editorial practices in Brazil and other countries.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the recent transformations in scientific communication, with an emphasis on publication models that aim for greater agility, transparency, and accessibility.

2.1 The Concept of Continuous Flow

In the context of Information Science journals, continuous flow refers to the optimization of the editorial process, from submission to publication, aiming for agility, efficiency, and rapid dissemination of knowledge (Womack; Jones, 1998). Information Science journals have adopted the continuous submission system, allowing authors to submit articles at any time, without the need to wait for specific editions (Sherparomeo, 2023).

Continuous publication, also known as "online first," allows approved articles to be made available immediately after the finalization of the editorial process, without waiting for the composition of a complete edition (COPE, 2020). This practice reduces the time between acceptance and availability of content, increasing the impact of the research (Lakatos; Marconi, 2021).

Editorial management systems, such as OJS (Open Journal Systems), are widely used to automate and integrate the stages of the process, ensuring a continuous and efficient flow (PKP, 2023). These tools allow real-time monitoring of the status of articles, from submission to publication.

Continuous flow aligns with the open access movement, which seeks to make scientific knowledge available immediately and free of charge, expanding the reach and impact of research (Bourne et al., 2004). It is a publication model that allows the dissemination of scientific articles continuously, without the need to wait for the composition of a complete issue of the journal. This model emerged as a response to the need to speed up the scientific communication process, especially in a context where the speed of disseminating scientific discoveries is crucial.

According to Campos (2018), Continuous Flow offers significant advantages for both authors and readers. For authors, the main advantage is the reduction of the time between submission and publication of the article. For readers, the advantage is immediate access to the most recent research, without the need to wait for the closing of a journal issue.

The adoption of the continuous flow model in scientific journals has proven advantageous in several aspects, especially in dynamic areas such as Information Science. One of the main benefits is the significant reduction in publication time, as articles can be made available as soon as they are approved, without the need to wait for the composition of complete editions. This agility in the dissemination of results is essential to maintain the timeliness and relevance of scientific production (Björk, 2017).

Furthermore, the immediate publication of articles contributes to increasing their visibility and, consequently, their impact on the academic community. Studies indicate that rapid availability favors the reading and citation of works, potentiating the advancement of knowledge in the area (Harnad et al., 2003). Another positive aspect refers to operational efficiency. With the automation and integration of editorial workflows, there is a reduction in rework and the time spent on manual processes, which contributes to more effective journal management (PKP, 2023).

However, despite these benefits, the sustainability of the continuous flow model poses important challenges. One of the main ones is maintaining the quality of peer review in an environment that demands faster responses, which can compromise the depth and rigor of the evaluation (COPE, 2020). Added to this is the need to ensure adequate human and technological resources, which support the

agility of the process without overloading editorial teams or compromising the infrastructure of the platforms (Lakatos; Marconi, 2021). Finally, the challenge of balancing publication speed with the requirement of academic rigor stands out, so that speed does not become synonymous with superficiality or loss of scientific quality (Björk, 2017).

2.2 The Importance of Open Access

Open Access is a global movement that seeks to make scientific knowledge available free of charge and without barriers, allowing anyone to access, read, share, and use research without financial, legal, or technical restrictions (CAPES, 2025). This model has gained prominence in recent decades, especially in the field of Information Science, where the rapid and broad dissemination of knowledge is fundamental.

Open access articles are more widely read and cited, as they are available to a larger audience, including researchers, students, and professionals who do not have access to scientific journal subscriptions (Harnad et al., 2004). This increases the impact of the research and the visibility of the author and the institution.

Open access eliminates financial barriers, allowing people from developing countries or institutions with fewer resources to have access to the same knowledge as researchers from developed countries (Willinsky, 2006).

By making research available immediately and free of charge, open access facilitates collaboration between scientists and the practical application of knowledge, accelerating discoveries and innovations (Bourne et al., 2004).

Much research is funded with public resources. Open access ensures that the results of these investments are made available to society, benefiting not only the academic community but also the general population (Suber, 2012).

Research funding agencies, such as CAPES in Brazil and the NIH in the USA, require that the results of publicly funded research be made available in open access (CAPES, 2023).

Several open access journals adopt the Article Processing Charge (APC) model as a way to make their operations economically viable. However, this model can represent a significant obstacle for researchers who do not have institutional or funding agency financing, hindering their participation in open scientific communication (Björk, 2017).

Scientific journals need to find sustainable models to cover editorial costs without relying exclusively on fees paid by authors (Lakatos; Marconi, 2021).

The growth of open access has led to the emergence of predatory journals, which prioritize profit over scientific quality. It is essential that authors and institutions verify the credibility of journals before submitting their work (Beall, 2016). Some researchers still prefer to publish in traditional journals, as they associate greater prestige with these vehicles (Suber, 2012).

2.3 Open Access Models

Open access models refer to scientific, academic, or cultural publications that are available free of charge on the internet, without financial, legal, or technical barriers to access. This movement emerged as a response to the limitations imposed by traditional publication models, which often restrict access to articles and research to subscribers or paying institutions (acessoaberto.usp).

Open access to scientific production can be made possible by different models, among which two main routes stand out: the Gold Open Access route and the Green Open Access route. In the Gold route, articles are published directly in open access journals, being available free of charge to the public from the moment of publication. In this model, editing and dissemination costs are generally covered by fees paid by authors, research institutions, or funding agencies (Bourne et al., 2004). The Green route, on the other hand, consists of the authors self-archiving versions of their manuscripts — whether pre-print or post-print — in institutional or thematic repositories, such as arXiv or SciELO, thus guaranteeing free access to the content (Harnad et al., 2003).

In addition to these two best-known approaches, other models have gained relevance. The hybrid model, for example, is adopted by traditional journals that operate under subscription, but which offer authors the option of making their articles accessible upon payment of a fee. In this format, only the paid articles are available in open access, while the rest of the content remains restricted (Björk, 2017). The diamond model, also called platinum, refers to open access journals that do not charge fees from either authors or readers, being generally maintained by institutions, which increases the visibility and impact of research, in addition to promoting the democratization of knowledge.

The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is one of the main platforms that promote open access. Founded in 2003, DOAJ indexes high-quality scientific journals that adhere to the principles of open access. Currently, DOAJ contains more than 20,000 indexed journals, covering various areas of knowledge.

2.4 The Evolution of Scientific Publication

Scientific publishing has undergone significant transformations over the centuries, from the first scientific journals in the 17th century to the modern digital systems of today. One of the most recent and impactful trends is the adoption of continuous flow (or continuous publication) in the publishing process, which aims to streamline the dissemination of knowledge and meet the demands of contemporary science (Silva; Cueto, 2019).

The first scientific journal dedicated to the communication of scientific discoveries, the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, was published in 1665, in the 17th century (Meadows, 1974). These publications were printed and distributed in a limited way, with regular intervals between editions. The first journals emerged as a response to the need to share scientific discoveries more broadly and organizedly" (Kronick, 1976).

In the 19th Century, there was an expansion of scientific journals, focusing on specific areas. The peer review process began to consolidate, but it was still slow and informal. In the 19th century, scientific journals began to specialize in specific

areas, such as physics, chemistry, and biology, reflecting the growing professionalization of science (Csiszar, 2018). Peer review, although still informal, began to consolidate as a mechanism to ensure the quality of publications (Patrus; Dantas; Shigaki, 2016).

In the 20th Century, scientific publishing became more structured, with the formalization of peer review and the growth of commercial publishers. However, the process remained slow, with long intervals between submission and publication. The 20th century also saw the formalization of the peer review process, which became a standard in major scientific journals (Patrus; Dantas; Shigaki, 2016).

2.5 The Digital Revolution and Open Access

In the 1990s, the internet revolutionized scientific publishing, allowing for the electronic distribution of articles and the creation of digital repositories. Initiatives such as the Budapest Open Access Initiative (2002) and the creation of platforms like SciELO and PubMed Central promoted the free availability of scientific articles. Journals began to publish articles online before printing, reducing the time between acceptance and availability.

Tools like OJS (Open Journal Systems) allow for the automation of the editorial process, from submission to publication, facilitating the continuous flow. Repositories like arXiv and SSRN allow authors to share preliminary versions of their articles before peer review, accelerating the dissemination of knowledge. AI tools are used to streamline text review, plagiarism detection, and reviewer recommendation.

The adoption of the continuous flow model has caused significant impacts on the dynamics of scientific communication. One of its main contributions is the acceleration of the knowledge dissemination process, allowing discoveries to be shared more immediately. This agility favors collaboration among researchers and stimulates innovation, especially in scientific fields that demand quick responses and constant updating.

Furthermore, the continuous flow makes the editorial process more agile and transparent. Authors can track the status of their manuscripts in real-time, from

submission to publication, which contributes to greater predictability and trust in the editorial system. This transformation in the temporality of publication breaks with the traditional model based on closed editions and reinforces a more dynamic logic of scientific information circulation.

Some international journals stand out for having pioneered the adoption of this model. PLOS ONE, for example, was one of the first to implement continuous publication, combining speed in the editorial process with a commitment to open access. Similarly, Nature Communications publishes articles as soon as they are approved, without the need to wait for the composition of specific issues. In the Brazilian context, there is a growing adherence to this editorial practice, especially among journals indexed in the SciELO database.

With the advent of the Internet, traditional editorial processes have been replaced by more agile and efficient methods. Continuous Flow publication is an example of this evolution, representing a change in how scientific articles are disseminated.

According to Björk (2017), scientific publishing is moving towards more flexible and dynamic models that allow for greater interaction between authors, editors, and readers. Continuous Flow is one of these models, which seeks to meet the demands of an increasingly globalized and connected scientific community.

3 METHODOLOGY

The research is characterized as exploratory and descriptive, with a qualitative approach. A documentary survey was adopted, based on secondary sources, specifically the DOAJ, to identify the Information Science journals indexed on the platform that adopt the continuous flow model. DOAJ was chosen because it is a renowned platform for registering open access journals, facilitating access and visibility of scientific publications.

Data collection was carried out on May 28, 2024, using the term "Science Information" as a search filter to identify Brazilian journals indexed in DOAJ. From this search, the journals listed under this classification were selected. For each

identified journal, an analysis of its editorial policies was performed to verify whether or not they adopted the continuous flow system.

In addition, a narrative literature review was conducted on the continuous flow model, its advantages, challenges, and impact on the dynamics of scientific publication, with the aim of contextualizing the data obtained and theoretically supporting the discussion of the results.

To achieve the objectives proposed in this study, a documentary survey was conducted based on data available in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). The process steps were carefully planned and executed as described below, aiming to ensure the transparency, replicability, and reliability of the results.

The first step consisted of identifying Brazilian open access scientific journals, linked to the area of Information Science, that adopt the continuous publication system. For this, only the DOAJ platform was used, internationally recognized for indexing open access journals with standardized editorial quality criteria. The choice of this database is justified by its comprehensiveness and the fact that it provides detailed editorial information, which allows for the extraction of reliable data for comparative analyses.

The search strategy was developed using the term "Science Information" in the DOAJ's thematic search field. This search was applied directly on the official website of the database (<https://doaj.org>) on May 28, 2024. After executing the search, two specific filters were applied: language (Portuguese) and country of publication (Brazil). This filtering aimed to refine the results and restrict them to the journals of interest for the scope of the research, avoiding the inclusion of journals from other areas or other national contexts.

As DOAJ brings together journals hosted on different platforms (e.g., SciELO, Open Journal Systems, among others), a manual check was performed to avoid duplications. Journals that appear in more than one database but have the same title and ISSN were counted only once, in order to preserve data consistency.

In the next step, the website of each identified journal was individually accessed to verify information about the adopted publication model. This process involved analyzing the editorial guidelines, instructions to authors, periodicity

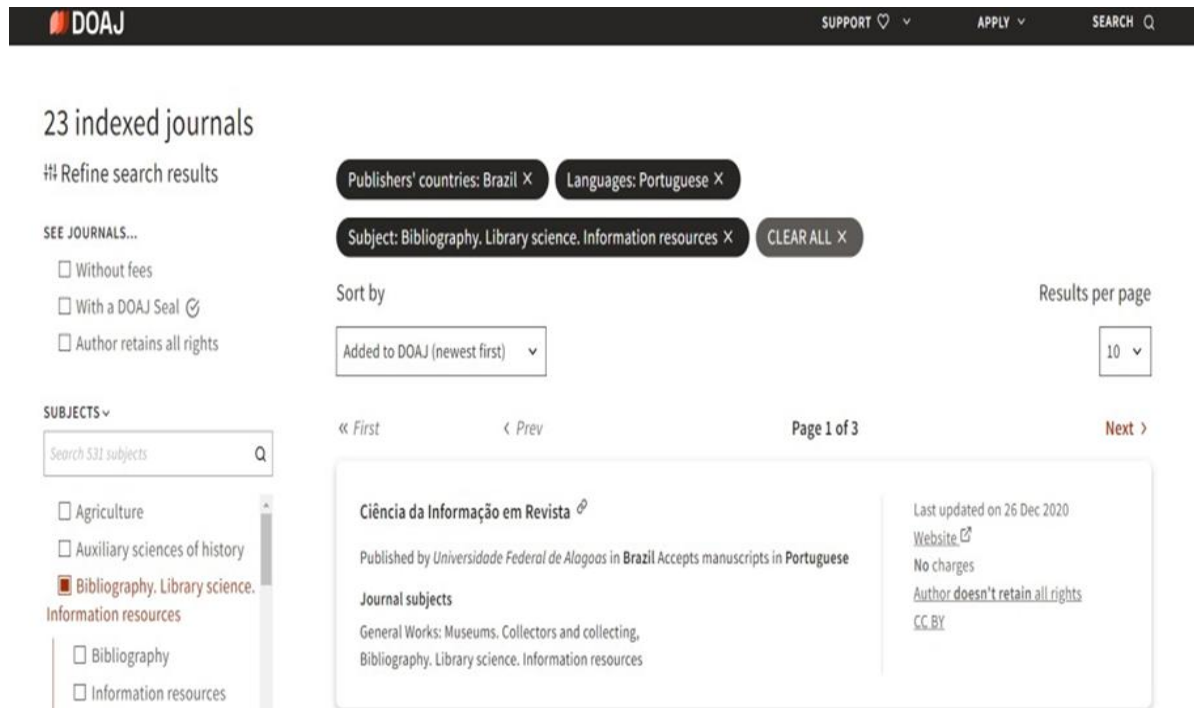
statements, and publication history, with the aim of confirming the practice of continuous publication. Journals that presented issues organized by volume and number were classified as operating under the traditional model, while those that published articles individually throughout the year, without grouping them into closed fascicles, were considered practitioners of continuous flow.

The collected data were organized in a digital spreadsheet created in Microsoft Excel 365, allowing for the structured and standardized recording of the following variables: journal name, ISSN, responsible publisher, hosting platform, periodicity policy (traditional or continuous flow), main language, and direct link to the journal's page. This spreadsheet served as the basis for the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Currently, DOAJ has 20,438 indexed journals and 10,079,827 article records in different areas of knowledge. Using the term "Science Information," we obtained a result of 200 journals, with Brazil as the geographical delimitation. After applying the filters for language (Portuguese) and country of editors (Brazil), we obtained a result of 23 journals, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figura 1 – DOAJ search.



Source: Prepared by the authors with research data (2024)

Of the 23 identified journals, 17 adopt the Continuous Flow model, while 6 do not follow this model. Only the journal "Cadernos de Informação Jurídica" is temporarily suspended. Table 1 presents the journals indexed in DOAJ that adopt the Continuous Flow system.

Table 1 – Journals Indexed in DOAJ.

Journal Name	Electornic Address	Contínuos Flow
Ciência da Informação em Revista	https://www.seer.ufal.br/index.php/cir/index	Yes
Informação em Pauta	http://www.periodicos.ufc.br/index.php/informacaoempauta/index	Yes
AtoZ: Novas Práticas em Informação e Conhecimento	https://revistas.ufpr.br/atoz	Yes
Liinc em Revista	https://revista.ibict.br/liinc/about	Yes
Múltiplos olhares em Ciência da Informação	https://periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/moci/index	Yes

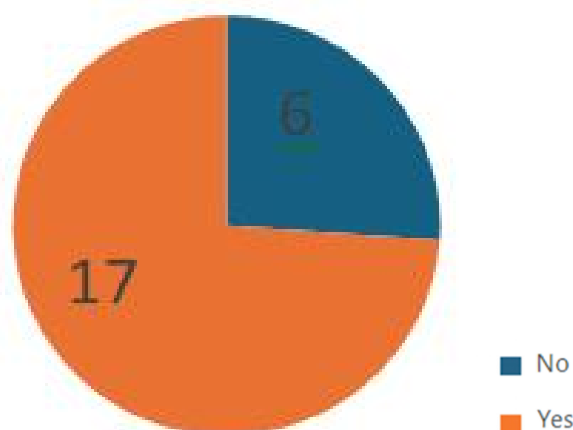
Perspectivas em Ciência da Informação.	https://periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/pci/index	Yes
Ciência da Informação	https://revista.ibict.br/ciinf/index	Yes
Revista Brasileira de Ciência da Informação	https://revistas.marilia.unesp.br/index.php/bjis/about	Yes
Logeion: Filosofia da Informação	https://revista.ibict.br/fiinf/index	Yes
Em Questão	https://seer.ufrgs.br/EmQuestao/	Yes
Transinformação.	https://periodicos.puc-campinas.edu.br/transinfocampinas.edu.br/transinfo	Yes
Fronteiras da Representação do Conhecimento	https://periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/fronteiras-rc/index	Yes
Revista Informação na Sociedade Contemporânea.	https://periodicos.ufrn.br/informacao/	Yes
Acervo	https://revista.arquivonacional.gov.br/index.php/revistaacervo/about	Yes
RDBCI: Revista Digital de Biblioteconomia e Ciência da Informação.	https://periodicos.sbu.unicamp.br/ojs/index.php/rdbci/about	Yes
Bibliocanto	https://periodicos.ufrn.br/bibliocanto/index	Yes
ConCI: Convergências em Ciência da Informação	https://periodicos.ufs.br/conci/about	Yes
Arqueão Online	https://periodicos.ufpb.br/ojs/index.php/archeion	No
Revista Ibero-americana de Ciência da Informação (RICI).	https://periodicos.unb.br/index.php/RICI/index	No
Revista Analisando em Ciência da Informação RACIn	http://arquivologiauepb.com.br/racin/publicacaoatual.htm	No
Perspectivas em Gestão & Conhecimento	https://periodicos.ufpb.br/index.php/pgc	No
Museologia & Interdisciplinaridade	https://periodicos.unb.br/index.php/museologia/index	No
Cadernos de Informação Jurídica	https://www.cajur.com.br/index.php/cajur	No

Source: Prepared by the authors with research data (2024).

Graph 1 below presents the distribution of Brazilian journals in the area of Information Science, indexed in DOAJ, according to the adopted publication model. The visualization allows for the identification of the proportion between journals that

use the continuous flow system and those that maintain the traditional publication model by issues.

Graph 1 - Journals with Continuous Flow



Source: Prepared by the authors with research data (2024).

The presented data indicate the adoption of the continuous flow model by the analyzed Brazilian Information Science journals, corresponding to approximately 74% of the total identified. This result points to changes in editorial processes, in line with open access practices and the need for greater agility in scientific communication.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The adoption of the continuous publication model by Brazilian scientific journals in the area of Information Science reveals a significant transformation in editorial practices and the dynamics of knowledge dissemination. This change is associated with the expansion of open access and the need to streamline scientific communication, especially in contexts where the speed of information circulation is crucial.

Continuous flow, by allowing the immediate publication of articles as they are approved, considerably reduces the time between acceptance and public availability

of manuscripts. This characteristic represents a substantial gain both for authors, who see their work achieve greater visibility in less time, and for readers and the scientific community, who can access updated content more quickly. This can also positively impact the citation index and impact factor of the journals, strengthening their relevance in the scientific field.

From an editorial perspective, the model offers greater flexibility in the planning and management of publications, as it dispenses with the need to close periodic issues. This change, however, requires a reorganization of workflows and the incorporation of technologies that automate processes, ensuring the maintenance of editorial quality and peer review, even with greater agility.

However, the adoption of this model also presents challenges. Among them, the need for investment in technological infrastructure, training of editorial teams, and maintenance of academic rigor standards stand out. Furthermore, in contexts where there is work overload or resource limitation, continuous flow can accentuate the pressure on editors and reviewers.

The analysis of the data extracted from DOAJ demonstrated that, although not yet predominant, the continuous flow model has been increasingly adopted by journals in the area in Brazil, suggesting a consistent trend of modernization and alignment with international best practices in scientific publishing.

Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of the strategic role of continuous flow in the Brazilian editorial scenario, especially in the field of Information Science. Future work may deepen the analysis of the impacts of this model on the quality of publications, the experience of authors, and the perception of the scientific community regarding open access communication.

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Metodology	X	X	X
Data collectio / investigation	X		
Data Curation	X		
Data analysis	X	X	X
Discussion of the results	X	X	X
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