

Writing to be cited or really to be read: towards the dynamics of open-access publishing

Advances made to date regarding information technology (IT) tools has led to the diversification of opportunities to enable communicating research results or producing new knowledge in a precise, reproducible and complete manner. Nevertheless, commercialising knowledge through for-profit commercial platforms and imposing quality criteria, mainly based on the amount of citations per document (i.e. impact factor), has made accessing scientific information into a complex process, causing a loss of pleasure regarding writing and the real objective of doing so as academics. This has led to information not being able to be used in such a way that it can really cause a positive impact on those communities for which research projects are/have been forged. On the contrary, this has simply encouraged the need to become published so as to become cited within a scientific circle whose background has often consisted of the premise of responding to a system of recognition and economic stimuli established by science, technology and innovation policies as imposed in many countries, not just in Latin America.

Several initiatives have been advanced regarding specialised information-related open access dynamics, mainly concerning copyright issues involved in publishing academic and scientific articles. These would include the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) (2002), the Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing (2003) and the Declaration of Berlin (2003) on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities, broadly supporting the concept of open-access¹. Such exercises involving different points of view envision being able to access, free of charge, methodically and responsibly constructed scientific information, in line with the principles of editorial quality and peer evaluation. A further reason for writing (perhaps the most important one) concerns writing to be read, aimed at boosting new knowledge's impact on the real focus of interest, transcending its social extension and applicability. This can be seen as a tangible way of measuring its real impact and the cost-effectiveness of public resources invested in a large part of research being carried out in many countries.

Editors of scientific journals must make sure that their publications reach and comply with the highest standards of quality. Even more so, they must ensure their visibility (i.e. raise awareness regarding their publications) and open/free access to them in line with criteria regarding copyright and the reproducibility of their scientific content. However, this is becoming increasingly impossible regarding the "quality" guidelines imposed by national journal classification systems, largely responding to the metrics/standards of international corporations which are totally unaware of local evaluation parameters, significantly slowing down the advancement of regional journals. The Network of Scientific Journals from Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (Redalyc - *Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina, el Caribe, España y Portugal*), a bibliographic database and digital library of open-access journals, provides an example of an academic project aimed at open access publishing of journals dealing with scientific activity. It is run by the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México in collaboration with hundreds of higher education institutions (HEI)². Similarly, the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO - *Biblioteca Científica Electrónica en Línea*), a bibliographic database, digital library and cooperative electronic publishing model for open-access journals, is a model for cooperative electronic publication of scientific journals³. It was created to meet developing countries' scientific communication needs and celebrated nineteen years of operation in 2018, making it one of the Latin-American networks having the greatest impact and visibility for journals indexed there.

The aforementioned open access networks (to name just two) also engage in detailed, responsible and quality measurement of international criteria for constructing metrics highlighting the impact and visibility of what we write in Latin America. Such measurement factors might be more objective and in line with our research development context and the true users

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- 1 Suárez DJC. What is the open access or open access content? *Intangible Property Magazine*. 2015. 20: 119-134. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18601/16571959.n20.06>
 - 2 Scientific Information System Redalyc Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal. 2017. At: http://www.redalyc.org/redalyc/media/redalyc_n/Estaticas3/mision.html
 - 3 SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online). 2018. At: <http://www.scielo.org.co>

of the new knowledge being produced. This should be analysed and contemplated (involving greater participation) for structuring criteria for classifying journals and research groups in Colombia.

The editorial boards of the world's scientific journals must thus continue striving, having understood that open access does not lead to reducing publications' editorial quality and content but rather provides an opportunity for the knowledge produced by research groups (whether supported by public or private financing) to become widely disseminated to the community in general. The Universidad de los Llanos understands the regional context and, as current editor of *Orinoquia*, I know that of the need for balance between publishing what is ours, what is regional and what is happening in other countries where common development goals/ regarding science, technology and innovation advance along the same path.

Researchers and editorial boards' ongoing and responsible work can ensure greater visibility and being more widely read by scientific communities and the general public. Platforms can be used for this which allow open access to information without having to submit to preordained guidelines or metrics which often do not apply to the local and national context; on the contrary, they reduce the chance of true change occurring in society through what we produce as the results of ongoing research.

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