

## Scientific dissemination immunizes against misinformation

The Sars-Cov-2 virus pandemic has placed science at the forefront of public debate. The discussion about medications, vaccines, fake news and measures to prevent Covid-19 has transcended the confines of universities and research institutions and become part of the daily lives of the population<sup>1</sup>. In a scenario dominated by social networks and marked by an enormous volume of information, the work of scientific disseminators who have managed to attract a following has gained notoriety, as they manage to clear up elementary doubts of the population and make it easier to understand complex concepts, using straightforward, accessible and objective language.

Scientific knowledge has acquired a significant audience during the pandemic because lies about Covid-19 threaten the lives of the population. It has been a long time since humanity has faced a disease that causes such high mortality on a global scale. The pandemic obliged scientific journals to ensure the swift publication of the available evidence, ensuring the quality of information and the identification of biases that could compromise it<sup>2</sup>. This is crucial because these works are the essential weapon to combat fake news, misinformation and conspiracy theories, which undermine the population's willingness to abide by the measures necessary to tackle the pandemic.

In this respect, *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva* assumed its responsibility as a journal with 25 years of accumulated experience, and several awards to its credit, emerging as a benchmark in critical reflection and scientific dissemination about the pandemic. The editorial board has scrutinized approximately four thousand original articles per year, to locate the most substantial findings in the Brazilian scientific production on public health.

In an infodemic<sup>1</sup>, not surprisingly, the most outlandish and incredible news, which appeals to the emotions and seems more surreal than reality itself, gains momentum. Scientific dissemination about Covid-19 has become an objective response by scientists to the negationist movement<sup>3</sup>, which calls the effectiveness of vaccines into question while sabotaging prevention measures and advocating miraculous cures.

In addition to scientific dissemination, from an infodemiological standpoint, it is necessary to continue to interpret ignorance and an antiscientific stance not only as the result of lack of information, but also as assumptions that are intentionally formulated, for economic, political and ideological reasons, to cast doubt on scientific consensus that are so well backed up by evidence that they are considered incontrovertible facts<sup>3</sup>. In this respect, and given the climate of narrative dispute, it is important to remember that science does not claim to be the absolute truth, as it is merely the means to reduce uncertainties<sup>4</sup>.

In epidemiological situations such as the one that humanity is currently experiencing, science is the only viable hope. For the pandemic of a disease that is still unknown, with no effective drug available, the best remedy continues to be the dissemination of reliable, straightforward and accessible information to the general public. In this sense, scientific communicators can continue to render a relevant service to society and rely on the trust placed in scientific methodology to overcome major epidemiological challenges.

Neyson Pinheiro Freire (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9038-9974>)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Editor de comunicação e divulgação científica, Revista Ciência & Saúde Coletiva.*

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