Comunicar: quality, visibility, and impact
Comunicar: calidad, visibilización e impacto

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Abstract:

Social science journals are undergoing a process of change to reach the quality standards required by knowledge assessment agencies. This paper presents an overview of the main areas requiring improvement in order to attain a better position, visibility, and impact for these journals. Considering its remarkable trajectory that makes it a reference in the field of social sciences, the model of the journal *Comunicar* is analysed, pondering the relationship between articles received and accepted, authorship, methodologies, and quality criteria employed by the journal. This piece concludes with a reflection on the existence of a new academic culture, the potential quality parameters of the journals and their indicators, the importance of the author of academic texts and his or her training, the establishment of topics of interest beyond the local or individual, visibility and transference, and the incorporation of new ways of measuring the impact of work, in line with the resources of the digital society.

Keywords: academic publication, scientific divulgation, impact, quality standards, indexation.

Resumen:

Las revistas científicas del ámbito de las ciencias sociales están experimentando un proceso de cambio para alcanzar los estándares de calidad exigidos por las agencias evaluadoras del conocimiento. Este trabajo plantea una revisión de los principales aspectos que pueden ser mejorados para que las revistas del área puedan lograr un mejor posicionamiento, visibilización e impacto. Considerando su destacada trayectoria, que la convierte en un referente en el ámbito de las ciencias sociales, se analiza el modelo de la revista *Comunicar*, teniendo en cuenta la relación entre artículos recibidos y publicados, la autoría, las metodologías y los criterios de calidad priorizados por la revista. Se concluye con una reflexión acerca de la existencia de una nueva cultura científica, los posibles parámetros de calidad de las revistas y sus indicadores, la importancia del autor de textos científicos y su formación, el establecimiento de temas de interés más allá de lo local o individual, la visibilización y transferencia y la incorporación de otros modos de medir el impacto de los trabajos, más en

consonancia con los recursos de la sociedad digital.

Descriptores: publicación científica, divulgación científica, impacto, estándares de calidad, indización.

1. The dissemination of knowledge through academic journals

Academic journals are the channel for divulging academic knowledge and passing on results from research teams to the academic community. Alongside books, and depending on the epistemological area, articles are increasingly the primary means for accessing knowledge (Andersen, 2000; Hirsch, 2005; Corrêa Jr., Silva, Costa, & Amancio, 2017). Readers, researchers, academics, and professionals can access advances from any subject area with the guarantee that the texts have been checked and evaluated following a peer-review process.

In recent years, this culture has become consolidated for reasons such as researchers' ethical duty and recognition by peers, and academic promotion (Baiget & Torres-Salinas, 2013), or impact on the selection and promotion of staff and on the classification of educational institutions and even sources of funding (Perales-Palacios, Vílchez-González, & Gutiérrez-Pérez, 2017). Consequently, journals have had to adapt and become spaces for effective communication so authors can present their findings to the largest possible audience in their academic field, in accordance with the principles and challenges of science or as an intellectual exercise (Hengl, Gould, & Gerritsma, 2011). Alongside this, and in line with the demands of the

academic world, quality standards have been adopted that attract researchers/authors, in the hope of obtaining advantages and benefits. At the career development level, recognition of research accomplishments in most subject areas is calculated based on the quality of the journals in which the works are published, and this has an impact not only on the profile of particular researchers and their standing as an expert, but also on the institutions they are part of.

Academic journals have unquestionably become consolidated as reference points containing the most important works that are the state of the art, advances in different disciplines, profiles of the most significant researchers and research groups with regards to original and novel results, and networks of esteem and citation in each field and relevant topic. In this sense, Petersen notes (2017, p. 256) the crucial role of editors and their control over academic discourse. Being dynamic, periodical, timely, up to date, and rigorous in the dissemination of knowledge, accessible, and ever more open and digital are factors that pay an important role in this.

1.1. New dissemination strategies

Disseminating articles is one of the basic tasks of the editorial team of an

academic journal, along with selecting the best works. Nowadays, this is an important commitment in an ever more open and connected society. Nonetheless, it is a controversial matter as open dissemination (Open Access, OA) has sometimes been associated with journals that do not rigorously comply with processes for selecting and reviewing the works they publish and do not have editorial teams that operate with professionalism, transparency, and quality. Furthermore, the academic system

> contains the paradox that open-access publication is clearly promoted, but when the academic activity of researchers is evaluated, agencies value especially highly journals covered by Web of Science […] or by Scopus (Giménez Toledo, 2014, p. 14).

This creates a difficult position for editorial teams as they have to align themselves with the requirements of OA and simultaneously the measurement demands of academic policy. Nevertheless, «OA is not in any way incompatible with quality» (Baiget & Torres-Salinas, 2013, p. 73); many open-access journals meet the quality requirements of an academic publication while there are other indexed journals that have poor editorial practices, do not have rigorous selection filters, and use predatory practices (Giménez-Toledo, 2014, p. 15).

The editorial team of a journal makes a commitment to the authors who entrust to them their best academic output for publication to be read by the greatest number of experts in the subject. This commitment guarantees the journal's prestige.

The desire to appear in the best repositories and databases, indexes classed as excellent, and OA are some channels for this, all with their own strengths and weaknesses.

In parallel, and in the context of the online society, there are other dissemination strategies for trying to reach society and facilitating the divulgation of knowledge among citizens and not just among researchers. Digital tools (Björk & Tenopir, 2017), alternative metrics and social networks are «important examples of how these changes are shaping publications and their dissemination» (Alonso-Arévalo & Vázquez-Vázquez, 2016, p. 16).

As a result, it is increasingly important for journals to develop and incorporate strategies to raise their visibility, such as: an accessible, user-friendly, intuitive, and efficient website, that offers the maximum amount of information about its publication policy and processes; blogs in different languages that allow dissemination, commentary, and analysis of certain published texts in a more accessible way; blogs on questions relating to the writing of articles, the journal's own instructions and its topics or area of specialisation, with posts by editors or specialists in academic writing and research; videos that present the journal itself and its editorial policy or instructions for uploading articles, accessing sections, or responding to calls for submissions; social networks accounts that make it possible to disseminate articles separately and make comments on them or on related events or the publication of an issue; newsletters

and mass mailings to email addresses of potential readers; media participation featuring interviews with editors or the coordinators of monographic issues who explain or comment on the most interesting aspects of what is being published, and so on.

The contribution authors make to science and knowledge with their work, along with the possibility that it will be cited and used as a source, are closely related to it having the maximum dissemination. Accordingly, open access, or the use of resources such as the ones mentioned above, does not mean abandoning editorial quality. In fact, evaluation reception among a broader public is starting to be considered (Adie & Roe, 2013; Torres-Salinas, Cabezas, & Jiménez, 2013). Alonso-Arévalo and Vázquez-Vázquez (2016) focus on evidence obtained from academic networks where authors and publishers can respond to and share work, manage their digital identity, and obtain data on the attention received.

1.2. Quality and impact

Quality and impact are not synonyms when considering academic publications. The quality of an academic journal is determined based on its editorial policy and process (exemplary and transparent), its editorial team (people with prestige and a track record in the area of the publication), and the impact of the publication (presence in databases, repositories, citations, rankings, indexing). Perales-Palacios, Vílchez-González, and Gutiérrez-Pérez (2017) underline the importance of criteria regarding editorial

policy, peer review, and structural methodologies. For his part, Repiso (2015, p. 46) notes transparency, professionalism of the editorial evaluation service, the academic experience of its members, the number of reviewers used, compliance with the different evaluation periods, notifying authors, and publication, along with formal aspects. Baiget (2014, p. 5) also emphasises «thoroughness when caring for the formal aspects, without forgetting a marketing effort that is vital today».

Peer review is undoubtedly a guarantee of quality as it entails evaluation by experts in the academic field (Delgado, Ruiz-Pérez, & Jiménez, 2006; Escribá & Cortiñas, 2013; Forrester, Björk, & Tenopir, 2017; Giménez-Toledo, 2014). In addition, the impact of citations of works —their impact factor— adds another level to the quality of the journal. In recent years, the change in the system for evaluating research in Spain has meant that fields such as social sciences are now evaluated using parameters from the experimental sciences, leading to concerns and problems (Escribá & Cortiñas, 2013). As a result, journals have consolidated quality practices in their publishing format and policy to attract to their publication works regarded as the best in the field that will subsequently be cited, allowing the journal to establish itself in the most important databases or indexes.

### 2. *Comunicar*: analysis of its structure and characteristics

Comunicar is an academic journal specialising in communication and

education, and specifically educommunication as an area where the two fields converge. It has a monographic section, comprising works with a specific research focus, and another miscellaneous section in which articles are published covering other topics, always within the line of interest of the journal, such as audiences, communication, information and communication technologies applied to the field of education and communication, the new languages of the media, and so on. In its 25 years of history it has published a total of 1,750 articles, including research and studies, on a twice-yearly basis. In 2016 from issue 46 it became quarterly, publishing 40 articles per year.

2.1. Articles and topics

Throughout the history of the journal, the number of articles received has increased significantly, and the number of articles rejected or turned down has also increased. This constant increase can be seen, particularly since 2016, when four issues started to be published each year. Approximately 200 articles are received per issue, making a total of over 800 per year (Graph 1). When compared with the figures from the period of twice-yearly publication (Graph 2), this trend to growth was already apparent. During those years, the articles received increased from 116 per issue to 306, with an annual figure increasing from 220 to 530. This information can be checked on the journal's website in the statistics section (www.revistacomunicar. com/index.php?contenido=estadisticas).

GRAPH 1. *Comunicar*, 46-55. Quarterly publication.
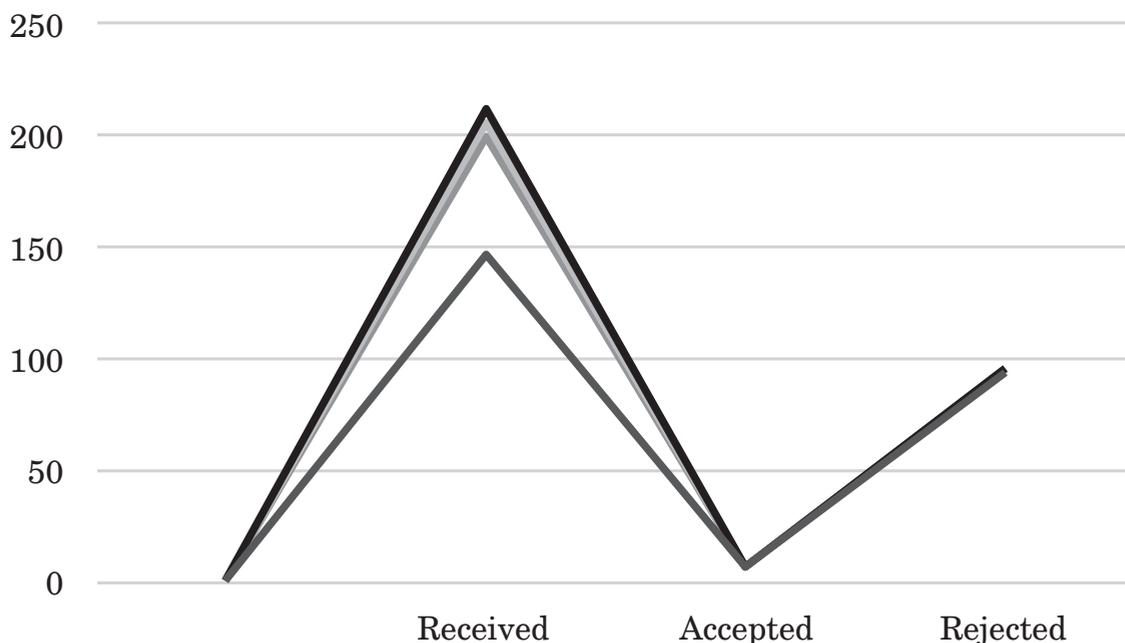
Source: *Comunicar* (https://bit.ly/2Jf3COh), 2018.

GRAPH 2. *Comunicar*, 39-48. Twice yearly publication.
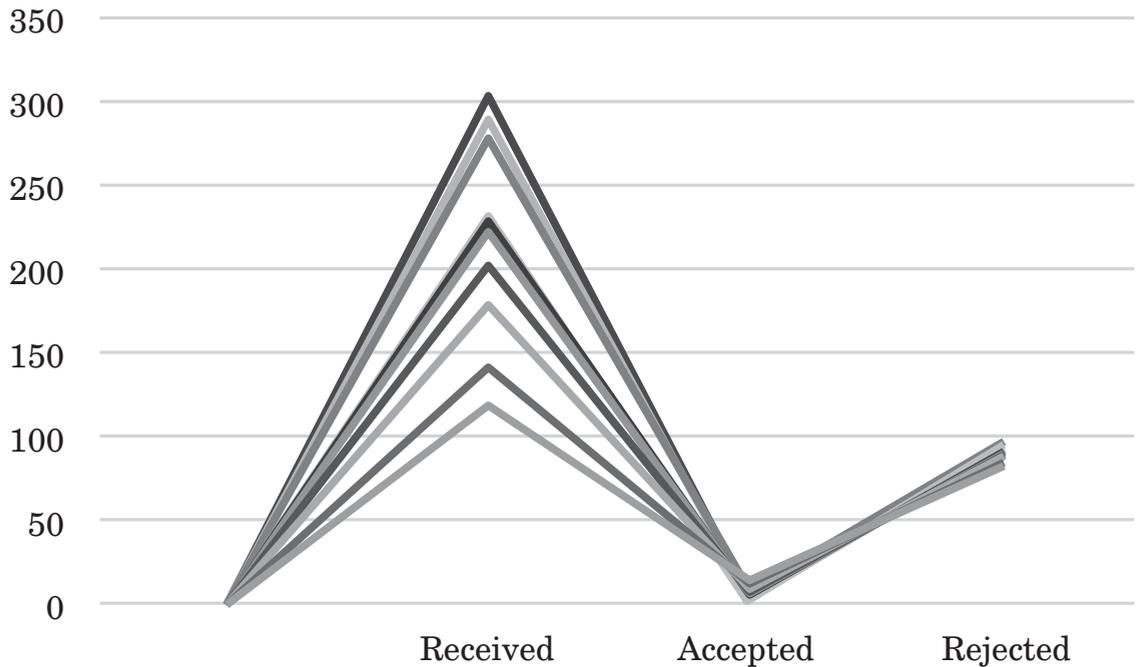
Source: *Comunicar* (https://bit.ly/2Jf3COh), 2018.

This increase in interest in publishing in the journal is explained, on the one hand, by the dissemination efforts made by the editorial team, in line with the policy regarding quality requirements and standards for accepting manuscripts, and by the positioning of the journal among the leading impact indexes. Since 2016, *Comunicar* has been in JCR-Q1 and Scopus-Q1, as well as being the best classified journal in Google in 2017 and in Redib (2018), which, as a consequence, attracts a larger number of authors to publish their works.

As well as the statistics about the number of articles received, rejected, and published per year, information is provided about the topics covered, the most read articles and the most cited ones. In this way, we attempt to show readers which studies, focuses, topics, and approaches are of most interest to the academic community and have an impact that clearly favours the positioning of the journal in the most select and demanding databases in the realm of academic publishing.

The analysis of the articles published shows a trend in interest in topics relating to education and the integration and use of new technologies and media, as well as in the field of communication, especially regarding social networks (Table 1). Contributions in which education and communication are linked are also among the most cited and most read.

TABLE 1. Most cited articles in *Comunicar* (historically).

Titles	Number of readers	Number of citations	
		WoS	Scopus
Media competence: articulated proposal of dimensions and indicators	12,039	66	49
From solid to liquid: new literacies to the cultural changes of web 2.0	15,446	43	61
A scale for the measurement of university teachers' attitudes towards the integration of ICT	9,345	41	35
New models of communication, profiles and trends in social networks	13,228	40	47
Young people and social networks: motivations and preferred uses	12,768	40	31
Altmetrics: new indicators for scientific communication in web 2.0	14,385	37	39
The academic use of social networks among university students	22,759	33	58
Media education, media literacy and digital competence	13,955	31	48
ICT in collaborative learning in the classrooms of primary and secondary education	15,739	30	16
Methodologies to improve communication in virtual learning environments	9,688	29	21

Source: *Comunicar*, 2018.

It is especially noteworthy that the subjects covered in the most cited and read works of the last three years (Table 2) are the use of social networks, in the field of communication and in education, and new related teaching models such as MOOCs and collaborative online learning.

TABLE 2. Most cited articles in *Comunicar* (2014-2017).

| Titles	Number of readers	Number of citations	
		WoS	Scopus
ICT in collaborative learning in the classrooms of primary and secondary education	15,739	30	16
Literature and Practice: A Critical Review of MOOCs	10,875	22	22

Titles	Number of readers	Number of citations	
		WoS	Scopus
Media literacy for older people facing the digital divide: the e-inclusion programmes design	10,534	20	20
Construction of the foundations of the PLE and PLN for collaborative learning	12,533	20	20
Are MOOCs promising learning environments?	12,215	18	15
A study on the pedagogical components of massive online courses	10,237	18	14
Educational possibilities of social networks and group work. University students' perceptions	10,850	18	12
Online and mobilized students: the use of Facebook in the Chilean student protests	10,051	17	16

Source: *Comunicar*, 2018.

From a different perspective, the tag cloud shows the most used terms in the journal, with communication, education, internet, television, media, media education, media literacy, adolescents, cinema, advertising and social networks being especially apparent.

GRAPH 3. Tag cloud.
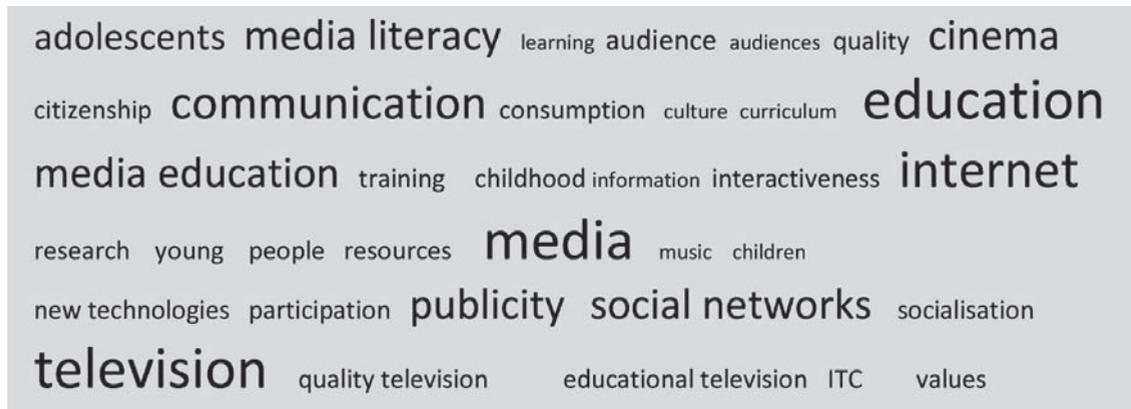
Source: *Comunicar* (https://goo.gl/DFriJM), 2018.

The structure of the journal has, from its first issue, consolidated the concept of the monographic topic in line with the most significant trends and advances in its areas of interest: education and communication. As a result, the journal brings togeth-

er contributions from leading authors in the subjects covered and international experts of the highest standing from institutions such as UNESCO, the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, etc. Although these monographs used to be commissioned, since 2007, a system of calls for contributions was gradually implemented, coinciding with the journal being indexed in prestigious databases.

In recent years, the participation of the various thematic editors responsible for the calls has made it possible to shape and ensure the participation of international teams of experts, so that the number of collaborations with a high international profile received for each issue has increased. Consequently, articles are frequently published by authors from different fields and from countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, favouring the growth of a consolidated international academic community.

Accordingly, the growth in the number of articles received appears to be directly related to the authors' interest in the topics selected for the monographic issues, as well as in the power of the calls for articles by the people responsible as thematic editors. Monographs such as issue 48 «Ethics and plagiarism in scientific communication» received 291 articles, and issue 47 «Communication, civil society and social change» received 281, following a trend in the last three years to receive over 200 per issue.

2.2. Authors
The author profile for the articles published in *Comunicar* is varied, although there are constants such as the profession-

al field (education and/or communication), and university and compulsory education teachers. Nonetheless, submissions are increasingly received from interdisciplinary teams that combine different levels of experience and focusses. This has led to a change in the journal's policy regarding the number of authors per contributions. Until 2016 there was a limit of three authors per article, in accordance with existing trends in the social sciences. In line with the new research and evaluation parameters in the journal's subject area, and coinciding with its period of quarterly publication, *Comunicar* no longer limits the number of authors. The authors decide on the number of participants depending on their work, the complexity of the research or contribution, of the team behind it, and of the relevance or impact of the article itself. Accordingly, a trend has become apparent of receiving articles from authors of different nationalities, multidisciplinary teams, and consequently researchers with international focuses that lead to results that might be of interest to and attract readers from all over the world.

Many of the authors who publish in *Comunicar* are references in the field of educommunication, communication and education, and their works comprise models or theories that have made it possible to interpret and improve educational activities, or have had an influence on the development of new concepts and practices.

2.3. Methodologies used
*Comunicar*, a leading journal in the field of communication, education, and

cultural studies, has a very demanding article selection process. It favours works with a solid and consistent methodological focus, relating to topics from education in media (media literacy), educational media and resources, educational technology, audiences, new languages, social networks, multimedia and audiovisual technologies, and so on. Analysis of texts published shows that substantiating and defining the aim of the study through a significant review of national and international literature is valued. As for the methodology, there are no restrictions and a range of types can be seen, with essentially holistic quantitative and qualitative ones standing out owing to the transversal character

of the focuses published. Precision, rigour, and consistence in describing the method and its implementation are valued, as well as setting out the reasons for using it and any potential limitations. The journal displays a preference for works that go beyond a methodological focus limited to local studies.

2.4. Quality

Quality criteria are key to improving the processes for publishing a journal as well as its indexing and impact factor. Analysis of the criteria *Comunicar* includes in its editorial policy gives an idea of its profile.

FIGURE 4. Quality indicators.

Source: *Comunicar* (https://goo.gl/N5Tfti)
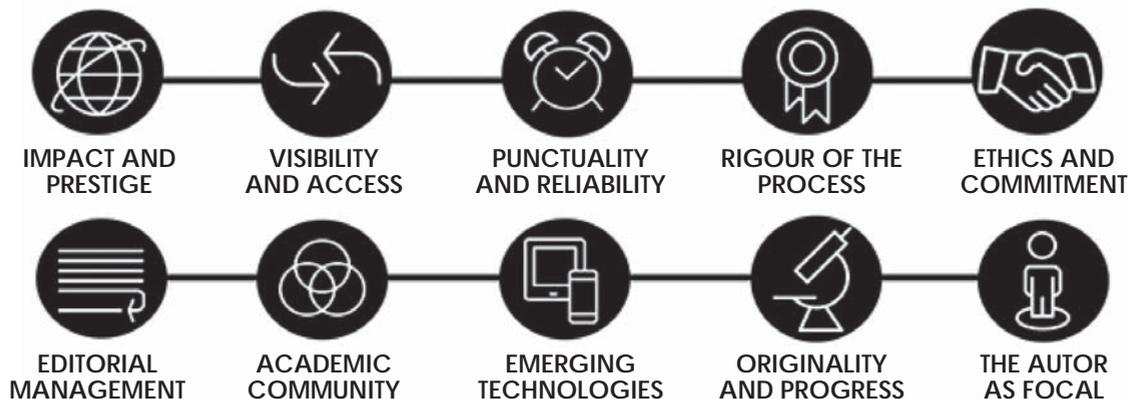
2.4.1. Impact and prestige

Indexing journals is a practice that has a close relationship with achieving subsequent impact and prestige. *Comunicar*'s dissemination and visibility policy and its academic track record mean it features in 623 databases: 91 international databases, 12 platforms for evaluating pub-

lications, 6 selective directories, 12 bibliographic databases, 10 selective journal collections, 19 specialist portals, 22 open access academic literature search engines, 21 library catalogues, and 406 catalogues from university libraries around the world. Notably, *Comunicar* is in the first quartile (Q1), in both Journal Citation

Reports (JCR) in the field of communication and education, and in Scopus (SJR) for cultural studies, education, communication and in Scopus (CiteScore) for cultural studies, education, communication. It also has the 2016-19 Seal of Excellence from Spain's Science and Technology Foundation (Fundación de Ciencia y Tecnología - FECYT), something it has held since 2007. This seal identifies best practices in Spanish university and academic publishing. It is also in ERIH+ and in Google Scholar Metrics (H: 58; 19,300 citations).

2.4.2. Visibility and access

We have already explained why open access to knowledge is important so that any reader can access to publication's articles. *Comunicar* publishes all of its articles online in Spanish and English, without embargoes. It also provides the metadata (title, abstract, and keywords) of its articles in Chinese and Portuguese. Accessibility is facilitated in multiple digital formats (ePub, pdf, html, and xml), without the printing of paper copies of the journal being abandoned, and so it is possible to subscribe to the printed version of each issue. It also makes its content visible through academic social networks such as Academia.edu or ResearchGate. Alongside these, it also uses other social networks that allow a broader dissemination, such as Facebook and Twitter, video and image channels like YouTube and Weibo, and reference management systems like Mendeley, RefWorks, and EndNote. The journal manages the DOI (Digital Object Identifier), as another aspect that gives its articles greater visibility and iden-

tification. Furthermore, it is compulsory for authors to have an ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) code, which guarantees their unique identity as an author and also allows better access to and dissemination of their works.

2.4.3. Punctuality and reliability

The editorial rigour of a journal is apparent in the timeliness of each of its phases of publication. In the case of *Comunicar*, its rules set out the time periods in the process of receiving and editing manuscripts so that authors have full information and details about each stage. There is an initial prior evaluation stage by the editorial team, in which it is decided whether the article will be considered or turned down, which does not exceed 30 days. The second stage is evaluation of the manuscript by experts to decide if it will be rejected or accepted. This lasts for a maximum estimated period of 100 days. The third phase, once the works to be accepted have been selected, is publication in preprint version in Spanish and English, 45 days before publication of the issue. The final stage is definitive publication online and in print on the date previously established in each call on the journal's website for each issue.

2.4.4. Rigour of the process

Evaluation by experts —peer review— guarantees objective and conscientious evaluation of each of the works sent to a publication. It is vital for journals to have a large number of experts in the topics they cover so that this process is carried rigorously, in a timely manner, and in

the correct form. Equally, transparency in its implementation and effectiveness as a quality filter for content are aspects that ensure the academic quality and distinction of the journal. *Comunicar* has an international panel of academic peer reviewers comprising over 550 researchers of acknowledged standing from over 40 countries from all over the world. Each article is subjected to evaluation by at least five experts in the field, ensuring a blind peer review process that is demanding, plural, and expressly excludes endogamy.

thors' and reviewers' details all through the editorial process. By the same token, *Comunicar* places particular emphasis on selecting reviewers who have the greatest experience and qualifications in the subject of each manuscript, where the evaluation criteria are the academic merit of the content provided, and in complying with the time periods laid down for the review and editorial decision-making process regarding the articles received, and the maximum dissemination of the articles finally published.

2.4.5. Ethics and commitment

Confidence in its editorial processes and procedures is vital for an academic publication. Accordingly, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) regulates the undertakings made by authors, academic reviewers, and the editorial committee. *Comunicar*'s ethical code guarantees the rights and duties of the academic community, and makes these principles its own. Authors therefore undertake to submit original manuscripts and to confirm the truthfulness of the data supplied, expressly stating in writing that their work is not under review by any other academic publication, that there are no conflicts of interest, and that they accept responsibility for the process of making corrections if there are errors in their work. As for the reviewers, their commitment is to critically, honestly, constructively, and unbiasedly evaluate both the academic quality and the style of the manuscript, in the field of their knowledge and skills. On the part of the editorial team, its responsibility and ethical commitment lies in maintaining the confidentiality of the au-

2.4.6. Editorial management

Rigorous editorial management entails a reliable and objective process. This essentially means that all of the information needed by authors is available and visible. *Comunicar* offers complete and detailed information about each of the phases in the publication of each issue on its website. This monitoring is done using FECYT's OJS platform. Authors use this to submit their articles and editors and reviewers use it to evaluate and reject or accept works. This is very easy to access and any documentation needed for sending manuscripts can be downloaded in Spanish and English: rules, pre-submission check lists, format for submission, citation rules, standardisation of author credits and email addresses, submission handbook, covering letter, review protocol, etc. Great care is taken in of the academic aspects of the content and contributions, stylistic quality, and professional typesetting and adaptation to different online publishing formats (ePub, issue, preprint, and print formats) the publication of each issue.

2.4.7. Academic community

The team of people who support a journal is vital for it to be consolidated in its field. Bringing together and securing this group of people is a major task, and is taken seriously, rigorously, responsibly, and meticulously in the various steps in the process. Over the 25 years of *Comunicar*'s history, it has published articles by 1,587 authors, with the assistance of 600 reviewers, read by thousands of people from all over the world. This has been possible thanks to the efforts of a group of researchers, academics from the world of communication and education, who guarantee innovation and academic progress in the field of educommunication. This team comprises the Editors Council, the Scientific Committee, the International Review Board, the Advisory Board, and the Board of Management.

2.4.8. Emerging technologies

A desire to keep editorial management systems up to date with regards to the latest trends and advances in technology to ensure better accessibility, visibility, and dissemination is one of the cornerstones of the success of a journal. Digital publishing allows great versatility, and streamlines and systematises processes. *Comunicar* has embraced emerging technologies, both in the area of publishing and in dissemination. This has involved adjustments to make the format flexible, updating models for communicating with authors, incorporating editorial management platforms and platforms for global and international dissemination of published articles, and strategic use of social networks, encouraging and expanding possibilities for dissemination among readers and researchers from every corner of the world.

2.4.9. Originality and progress

Publishing in academic journals contributes to academic progress and development. Authors entrust their works, discoveries, theories, revisions, and reflections to the academic world and this provides feedback through these communication channels and spaces for debate. Therefore, the fact that only original and previously unpublished works that guarantee genuine progress in the results presented and are of interest to the academic community are accepted for publication is a key guarantee of quality. *Comunicar* regards the originality of the works submitted as one of its prime objectives. Given this, all articles submitted are checked for plagiarism using the professional CrossCheck program, since plagiarism and self-plagiarism are both grounds for rejecting a work, as stated in the regulations. As for the significance of contributions, the different committees, in particular the scientific and review committees, ensure that articles are selected on the grounds that they provide a significant advance in academic knowledge relating to education and communication, favouring works that could be a point of reference in the field of educommunication.

2.4.10. The author as focal point

The authors of the different manuscripts are the objective and key of the whole process of publication of a journal. For *Comunicar*, the trust placed in us by

authors who submit their unpublished, original works in which they have invested their time, effort, professionalism, and hopes for publication and dissemination of their findings is of extraordinary value. Therefore, we place special emphasis on strategies for academic dissemination of articles to ensure the greatest possible visibility through all available academic dissemination systems, as well as identifying the authors as rigorously as possible. The website shows the details for how to cite each piece of work correctly, its online updates (Crossmark), any support received from external institutions and bodies (FundRed), up-to-date information about citations by other authors, and the manuscript's impact metrics.

3. Conclusions and keys to improving education research journals

The current academic and scientific context in which the progress and career of a researcher are evaluated based on their publications classed as academic (Corrêa Jr., Silva, Costa, & Amancio, 2017) has led to an increase in publishing and the failure of many journals in each subject area. In the case of educational research journals, this situation has led to much unease as it has meant a major change in the concepts and parameters to which researchers and academics are accustomed. This academic culture, which is more typical of the experimental sciences or other more technical fields (Perales-Palacios et al., 2017), has been characterised by the dissemination of advances and findings in works and studies with numerous researchers or interdisciplinary and international teams as authors, citations of

works and their effect on the journal's impact, peer review, publication in foreign journals and in the English language, among others changes. In contrast with this, normal practice in the social sciences was for individual publications, or works with two authors at most, and using the format of essays, books, chapters, reflections, and practices or proposals.

Evaluation agencies' interest in international indicators has made it necessary to develop policies that allow social science journals to meet the demands of researchers who are required to publish in high-impact journals. Consequently, «in recent years the dissemination of production in the social sciences has tended towards similar paradigms to those in the experimental sciences» (Escribà & Cortiñas, 2013, p. 36). The actions of FECYT calls for evaluation of editorial and scientific quality, obtaining the FECYT Seal of Excellence and subsequent submission to WoS and Scopus for evaluation, LATINDEX workshops for journal editors, the REDALYC methodology for evaluating academic journals, and the SciELO methodology for dissemination and evaluation of research can be interpreted in this light (López-González, Moreno-Pulido, Rubio-Garay, Sánchez-Elvira-Paniagua, & Saúl, 2013). This will have an impact on the consolidation of parameters relating to the quality of journals. In line with Alcaín-Partearroyo, Román, & Giménez-Toledo (2008), Baiget and Torres-Salinas (2013), and Corrêa et al. (2017), our priorities are: a) formal quality and the quality of the editorial processes: selecting and reviewing articles, plagiarism and duplicate version control, ethical norms, lay-

out design, the journal's rules, bibliographic formats; b) quality of content: evaluation of methods used by authors, checking data, style of writing; c) the necessary international visibility: promoting the journal at conferences and courses, online access, adverts and calls for contributions, dissemination lists and social networks; d) repercussion and impact: indexing in national and international databases; e) continuity in publication and the editorial project, periodicity, information about the process of selecting contributions by reviewers external to the publisher, etc.

The experience gained from 25 years' uninterrupted work at *Comunicar* and the status it has achieved as an academic journal can be inferred from the compliance with each of the aspects listed as quality indicators: impact and prestige, visibility and access, punctuality and reliability, rigour in the process, ethics and commitment, editorial management, academic community, emerging technologies, originality and progress, and the author as maxim. Each of these entails an exercise in good practices (Aguaded, I., & Fonseca-Mora, M. C., 2012) with the joint participation of the editorial team and the authors who entrust their works to the journal.

In particular, the figure of the author is key to the success of the publication. Researchers must provide quality and relevance in their research and be skilled in suggesting topics that appeal to an international readership (Hengl, Gould, & Gerritsma, 2011; Escribà & Cortiñas, 2013; Corrêa et al., 2017; Petersen, 2017). Baiget and Torres-Salinas (2014, p. 17) consider that «the three vital ingredients that guarantee success» are «care in

the content, in the format or presentation, and in the marketing or promotion». *Comunicar*'s school of authors (https://comunicarautores.com) is an example of its attention to these factors. This provides resources for publishing manuscripts in academic journals, covering aspects of interest for planning, preparing, writing, dissemination, managing scientific information, etc. Its aim is to provide training (Hengl et al., 2011) in this important academic culture, in line with other prestigious international publications in the top quartiles that provide online resources for authors. There is also an effort to root out practices of academic dishonesty, by explaining issues relating to fraudulent indexes and practices, how works should be cited, the meaning of OA, and transparency in writing, review, and publishing processes.

In relation to topics, the system of calls for submissions guarantees coverage of subjects or seams of knowledge presented by expert thematic coordinators that attract the most powerful and up-to-date research, which has the chance of being a point of reference and so being cited. Alongside the articles that are part of the monograph, an equal number of other submissions —miscellanea— are accepted, submitted by the authors' own initiative and not necessarily on the topic proposed. This expands the issue's focus and maintains the continuity of the thematic line of the journal by consolidating its academic community. Consequently, its methodological plurality is not restricted. *Comunicar* publishes both research and studies, reports, and reviews so long as they meet the rigour and coherence of method standards that are promoted.

Dissemination is undoubtedly the key for ensuring knowledge and the results of research work reach society, based on the influence and impact they have in practice and on educational policy. Therefore, it is important for the editors of educational research journals to accept the need to incorporate procedures for visibility, dissemination, and editorial, information, and academic quality, something that would undoubtedly favour their being indexed in specialist databases (Moreno-Pulido et al. 2013, p. 9). Educational research journals should be reference points for the transfer of their results, and this depends on the academic community that supports each publication being aware of the solidity and rigour of what is published. Endogamic practices must be rooted out in favour of teams that value multidisciplinary work, from different centres and universities, from a range of countries, with research objectives that are clear, attainable, and relevant to the field. «A slow, firm, and constant movement of forces —perhaps irreversible— in which individual research is losing ground to collective works» is apparent (Escribà & Cortiñas, 2013, p. 42).

The objectives and quality mechanisms of a journal vary according to its aims. Nonetheless, their precision and transparency contribute effectively to the publication being chosen by researchers, since «the legitimate aspiration of any academic is to publicise their research in the most respected and recognised journals in their academic field» (Baiget & Torres-Salinas, 2013, p. 17). Quality evaluation can now be done by multiple products, including, Scopus, Google Scholar Metrics, Microsoft Academic Search, and impact indicators based on citations: SNIP, Eigenfactor, SJR, etc., and Web of Science. However, other systems are starting to be considered (Adie & Roe, 2013; Torres-Salinas, 2013; Forrester et al., 2017), «given the methodological limitations of the systems for measuring the impact of academic publications» (Alonso-Arévalo & Vázquez, 2016, pp. 15-17). These limitations principally relate to disciplinary biases since the experimental sciences are better represented in these indexes as behaviour in the use of citations and obsolescence vary greatly by subject area, linguistic biases, the limited impact of academic communications from developing regions, etc. Another debatable aspect of this measurement is that it «only analyses the impact the publication has in its subject area, but not its reception among a wider public». Therefore, the exclusive use of traditional impact indexes is starting to be questioned in favour of indicators based on Web 2.0, «so-called altimetrics» (Repiso, 2015, p. 47). These are alternative metrics that evaluate other aspects relating to how a work is received or interpreted, how often it is viewed or downloaded, if it is mentioned in blogs or shared on social networks and reference managers, if it is disseminated in the media, such as the press, radio, or television, among others (Torres-Salinas, Cabezas, & Jiménez, 2013; Giménez-Toledo, 2014; Alonso-Arévalo, J. & Vázquez, 2016). It appears that these other metrics, with their strengths and weaknesses, can contribute to a more complete overview and measurement of works (Torres-Salinas et al., 2013), especially in areas where impact is harder to quantify.

This is especially important from the perspective of an online publication. In a

hyperconnected society, the possibilities for disseminating a journal, increasing its visibility and managing editorial processes in a standardised, user-friendly and accessible manner, among others, increase with online publication. This does not mean abandoning the printed version, unless this is deemed advisable, although it much more likely that the journal will become internationally known and significant in a digital format.

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This is the English translation of the studies and book reviews in the original Spanish printed version of issue 271 of **revista española de pedagogía**. The complete Spanish version of this issue can also be found on the journal's website (http://revistadepedagogia.org).