

Science Communication on Instagram: Contributing to the Nutrition science popularization

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Background: In the last years, access to information has changed dramatically. Social media platforms have become the primary source of information for the population. Indeed, social media enables the communication between people all over the world, as well as allowing us to access several kinds of information. Due to its availability and accessibility, social media plays a crucial role in increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion within science. Social networking sites, such as Instagram, have become one of the main communication channels between scientists and society. Engaging scientists on non-academic social networks has been influential in building trust and humanizing them in the public's eyes. Furthermore, nutrition has also become a relevant topic on Instagram, as users believe that food can directly impact health. Also, limited access to information about science makes it difficult for the general population to understand scientific research. In addition, fake news has been spreading rapidly through social media, and many people found difficult to obtain reliable information. Thus, this work aims to bring information based on scientific evidence to the public through Instagram.

Methods: The Instagram account @nutrigenomica_uff was created in 2018 to help to disseminate information about nutrition research. On Instagram, posts with reliable content about research techniques on the nutrigenomics field, laboratory routine, dissemination of scientific publications, and research projects about nutrition were published to inform and disseminate science to society. The posts' content is related to the research done by the Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics Research Group at the Universidade Federal Fluminense. In addition, networking with researchers and institutions to establish partnerships is also done through Instagram.

Results: Currently, the profile on Instagram has 1,644 followers and reached 1,103 accounts from June 5th - July 4th, 2021. Also, the profile obtained 6,217 impressions and 340 post interactions in the same period. The audience comprises 84.3% women and 15.7% men, and 39.6% of the followers are between 25-34 years old.

Conclusion: Scientists have the responsibility to promote knowledge and contribute to building a more just and equal society. Instagram is a powerful tool in science communication and dissemination. Moreover, using this tool makes it possible to be closer to society. Additionally, disseminating scientific research clearly and objectively helps to increase society's interest in science.