

THE ROLE OF DIGITAL MEDIA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: AN ANALYSIS OF THE POPULARIZATION OF PARASITOLOGY

LUIZ ROBERTO MORIE DOS SANTOS¹, THAINÁ DE MELO¹, ADRIANA RAINERI RADIGHIERI¹, MARIA VITÓRIA MARINHO PORTELA¹, ANA BEATRIZ LOMELINO DE QUEIROZ¹, BEATRIZ ALBUQUERQUE MACHADO¹, JULIA LEONIDIA DE OLIVEIRA SILVA¹, THAYS GEOVANA PACHECO DA SILVA¹, CLAUDIA MORAES CLEMENTE LEAL¹, LUCIANA BRANDÃO-BEZERRA¹, ALINE APARECIDA DA ROSA¹, CARLOS EDUARDO DA SILVA FILOMENO¹, RENATA HEISLER NEVES¹.

¹ RIO DE JANEIRO STATE UNIVERSITY, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the implementation of measures such as physical distancing, while the use of technologies reshaped interpersonal relationships and work dynamics. In this context, social media (SM) emerged as the primary means of communication, although they also contributed to the spread of fake news, exposing the population to misleading information. Addressing this scenario, the extension projects Parasito Educac and the Parasitology League of the State University of Rio de Janeiro used social networks as a bridge between the university and society, promoting health education and disseminating general aspects of parasitology from May 2020 to January 2022. To achieve this, profiles were created on platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, where content on topics such as basic concepts, medically significant diseases, news debates, ectoparasites, diagnostic methods, and health promotion was developed and shared. The material production involved a literature review using national and international databases, along with free tools like Canva and PowerPoint to create posts, videos, and polls. Over the period, 165 publications were made, with topics on diagnostic methods and parasite protection garnering the most attention from the audience. Analyzing the profile of the 32 participants involved in content creation revealed a mixed group of students, including those already experienced in similar activities. The main challenges reported were adapting scientific language to make it accessible to the target audience (43.7%), followed by ensuring clarity (18.7%) and conciseness (18.7%) of the content. It is concluded that the use of SM during the pandemic not only facilitated effective communication with diverse audiences but also contributed to the professional growth of undergraduate students, enhancing skills such as knowledge, creativity, and teamwork.

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