

SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATION IN THE MASS MEDIA AS A PART OF SCIENTISTS' PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

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The media is an effective platform for communicating to the general public about scientific developments, achievements and scientists' contribution to the modernization of society. In accordance with the researchers, communicating science can be done directly, by who investigates or by mediation of journalists, who do reach the public to the knowledge generated in academic areas [18, p. 60]. The involvement of science and scientists in the media promotes social science achievements, increasing prestige of scientific activity, strengthening authority of scientists in society and development of scientific and educational spheres as without the stated above social benefits science cannot be considered to be an integral part of social and state priorities.

In this regard, S. Martinez-Conde and S. L. Macknik argue that like the proverbial tree falling in a forest with no one around to hear it, science discoveries cannot have an impact unless people learn about them. The act of communication is part and parcel of doing research. And in an era increasingly defined by open access, there is a growing demand for researchers to communicate their findings not just within their field – via institutional seminars, conference presentations, and peer-reviewed publications – but to general audiences as well [15, p. 8127]. In this context, Y. Barel-Ben David and colleagues state that the news media wields distributional power that could be harnessed by scientists as a platform to present their ideas to broad audiences [2]. Objectively submitted by the media scientific discussions and controversies allow to fully and clearly convey the dynamics of the development of science and society, their interconnection [9, p. 23].

Although Ukrainian scholars examine different aspects of the science-media relationship and explore the activity of scientists as public communicators [e.g., 4; 11; 12; 19], at the same time the problem of science communication, as noted by T. Yaroshenko and T. Borysova, is extremely relevant for Ukrainian researchers [13, p. 44]. Similarly, M. Butyrina points

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out that there is a certain lack of effective communication between scientists and the society. Her research shows the negative dynamics of the presence of popular scientific content in media space structure [6].

It should be acknowledged that Ukrainian scientists are not very active and accessible in covering Ukrainian science and communicating what they were working on. However, recently there has been some positive in intensifying the dialogue between Ukrainian scientists and the media. Moreover, in the Ukrainian media landscape there is such a phenomenon as scientists-led media. Active Ukrainian scientists-enthusiasts have started and are implementing their own media projects, also produce popular science media on their own. Today, unlike the long-standing tradition of avoiding contact with public, Ukrainian scientists especially of the younger generation have understood the importance of communication with a general audience. Popular science media produced by scientists play a role of a communication platform that helps to disseminate scientific knowledge to the public, increase its critical thinking and comprehension of science-based content, promote scientific and media literacy. These scientists-led media operate online, and it is obvious that both academics and the public are interested in the internet-based media [10, p. 636]. The fact of the matter is, the Internet today has a special role in the communication of science.

Communication of scientists via the Internet helps promote information expansion of science, the creation of new resources and ways of communication. Online communication is undoubtedly an effective means of disseminating information on science, and it is clear that its position will strengthen over time. N. Demchuk predicts that the number of consumers of online scientific content will grow at the expense of young people [7, p. 328].

The latest development of information and communication technologies requires that scientists should communicate science online. The internet provides modern scholars with unprecedented space for communication with the public. For example, A. Dudo maintains that: «New media technologies grant scientists more power than ever before to be proactive about their public communication» [8, p. 761]. Moreover, O. Kopanieva emphasizes that, thanks to the internet, science communication in Ukraine is improving [14, p. 37]. However, L. Bronnikova warns that today the system, which did not allow clogging science with uncertain and dubious information, is actually being destroyed. The Internet allows anyone to make public information in the complete absence of expert filters [5, p. 41]. Nevertheless, electronic channels and digital tools expand the communication of modern scientists [16, p. 30].

Although it is accepted that the part of a scientist's duty is to talk to public, yet most practicing scientists are not able to communicate to non-scientists and lack the training and opportunity to do so [3; 17]. Similarly, there are no

educational science communication activities in Ukraine yet. Moreover, communication still is not considered as obligatory in the country's scientific system. Therefore, in order to enhance the quality of discourse between scientists and the lay public, science communication training should be implemented in Ukraine. For realization of this goal, standards and scholarly practices developed by foreign authors can be used. For this reason, A. Baram-Tsabari and B. V. Lewenstein identify core competencies for effective science communication in terms of skills, knowledge, and attitudes [1].

To sum up, the functioning of the science in Ukraine largely depends not only on the ability of scientists to work at a high professional level but also their active position in communicating domestic science. As such, science communication in the mass media performs an important role.

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