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Governing Scientific Knowledge Through Editorial Transparency: An Exploratory Documentary Assessment of Open Science Practices in Food Science Journals from Peru and Mexico

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Abstract

Contemporary scientific publishing plays an increasingly important role in the accessibility, circulation, and governance of scientific knowledge within the context of open science and growing demands for editorial transparency. Despite the expansion of scientific production in emerging academic ecosystems, many journals continue to face structural challenges related to editorial professionalisation, technological infrastructure, international visibility, and implementation of international publishing standards. This study analyses the extent to which food science journals from Peru and Mexico comply with scholarly publishing standards promoted by EASE, COPE, and DOAJ. A qualitative and documentary comparative approach was adopted through the analysis of six scientific journals using an evaluation instrument composed of 23 criteria grouped into three dimensions: editorial ethics, peer review and equity, and transparency and communication of editorial information. The findings reveal important advances in editorial ethics and open access practices, alongside persistent limitations associated with peer review transparency, digital preservation policies, dissemination mechanisms, and governance visibility. Mexican journals demonstrated comparatively stronger transparency-related practices, while Peruvian journals showed greater internal heterogeneity. The study concludes that strengthening scientific communication in emerging publishing ecosystems requires broader commitments to transparency, open science, and equitable access to scientific knowledge.

Keywords: open science; editorial transparency; scientific communication; knowledge governance; scholarly publishing; peer review; access to scientific knowledge; emerging publishing ecosystems

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Academic Editors: Jorge Gallardo-Camacho, Adriana Amado Suárez, África Presol Herrero and Andrew Kirby

Received: 20 May 2026
Revised: 10 July 2026
Accepted: 24 July 2026
Published: 5 August 2026

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1. Introduction

Over recent decades, scholarly publishing has undergone significant transformations associated with digitalisation, the expansion of open access, and the development of the open science movement. Within this evolving landscape, scientific journals have expanded beyond their traditional role as dissemination channels to become key infrastructures involved in the validation, circulation, preservation, and legitimisation of scientific

knowledge. Consequently, editorial transparency, publication ethics, and the adoption of international standards have assumed increasing importance within contemporary scholarly communication systems (Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; Roth et al., 2026).

Editorial transparency is currently regarded as a central component of open science. Elements such as the clarity of editorial policies, transparency in peer-review procedures, ethical manuscript management, digital preservation, and accessibility of editorial information may influence the credibility, visibility, and legitimacy of scientific journals. In response to these challenges, international organisations such as the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the European Association of Science Editors (EASE), and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) have developed recommendations and reference frameworks aimed at strengthening editorial quality, ethical publishing, and responsible scholarly communication.

However, the existence of international standards alone does not necessarily ensure transparent editorial communication. Their contribution ultimately depends on the extent to which editorial policies and governance practices are explicitly communicated and made publicly accessible through journal websites. Recent studies further suggest that transparent editorial policies and clearly communicated governance practices may contribute to strengthening credibility, institutional trust, and confidence in scholarly communication systems (Committee on Publication Ethics, 2017; European Association of Science Editors, 2024; Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; Roth et al., 2026).

In several Latin American countries, open access has played an important role in facilitating access to scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, previous studies suggest that journals operating in some regional contexts continue to face challenges related to editorial professionalisation, international visibility, process standardisation, and the adoption of internationally recognised publishing standards (Azevedo Gibbon et al., 2025; Sánchez-Pita et al., 2025). Such challenges may influence the visibility, transparency, and perceived legitimacy of scientific journals within broader scholarly communication systems.

Similar challenges have also been documented in other publishing ecosystems across Africa and Europe, suggesting that editorial transparency and governance remain common issues extending beyond the Latin American context despite the widespread adoption of open-access publishing models (Kwanya & Ateka, 2026; Stojanovski & Mofardin, 2025). The recurrence of these findings across different publishing ecosystems suggests that editorial transparency should be understood as a broader scholarly communication issue rather than as a challenge restricted to a particular geographical region.

The evaluation of editorial transparency and governance practices has attracted growing attention within scholarly communication research. Previous studies have employed documentary assessment frameworks based on publicly available editorial information to examine transparency policies, ethical standards, editorial management, and open science practices across scientific journals. These studies suggest that systematic analyses of journal websites may contribute to identifying strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement in editorial systems and to understanding how editorial information is communicated to authors, reviewers, and readers (Kiran et al., 2023; Turcan et al., 2026; Sánchez-Pita et al., 2025; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026).

In particular, Kiran et al. (2023) applied a documentary evaluation approach to analyse transparency and editorial practices in academic journals, illustrating the potential transferability of this type of methodology to different institutional and disciplinary contexts. Rather than evaluating the operational effectiveness of editorial processes, these documentary approaches focus on how editorial policies and governance practices are publicly communicated. This perspective is particularly relevant because transparency

depends not only on the existence of editorial standards but also on their visibility and accessibility to authors, reviewers, and readers.

Despite the growing body of research on journal transparency and editorial governance, comparative analyses focusing specifically on food science journals from Peru and Mexico remain limited. This gap is particularly relevant considering the strategic importance of food science for food security, agro-industrial innovation, sustainability, and public health. Journals operating in this field play a significant role in the dissemination of applied scientific knowledge and in the transfer of research findings to academic, industrial, and societal stakeholders.

Accordingly, additional empirical evidence is needed to explore the extent to which food science journals from Peru and Mexico align with internationally recognised standards of editorial transparency, publication ethics, and open science. The contribution of the present study does not lie in proposing a new evaluation framework. Rather, it seeks to generate empirical evidence from an underexplored context through the application of established criteria derived from internationally recognised editorial standards. This positioning also avoids presenting the selected context as exceptional. Instead, Peru and Mexico are examined as two relevant cases through which an established documentary methodology can be applied to generate empirical evidence from an underexplored disciplinary setting. In this sense, the study follows a logic of methodological transferability and replicability within scholarly communication research (Kiran et al., 2023; Buckler & Gilmore, 2026).

Against this background, the study addresses the following research questions: What level of compliance do food science journals from Peru and Mexico demonstrate regarding editorial transparency, publication ethics, and open science practices? Are there differences among the journals analysed in relation to the adoption of these standards? What strengths and challenges may be identified regarding editorial management and transparency practices?

To address these questions, an exploratory, documentary, comparative, and interpretative study was conducted based on the analysis of six food science journals, three from Peru and three from Mexico. The assessment employed a set of criteria derived from recommendations and standards promoted by COPE, EASE, and DOAJ, using publicly available information published on the journals' websites.

The findings may be interpreted as indicative of differences among the journals analysed in relation to editorial transparency, communication of ethical policies, and adoption of open science practices. They also suggest opportunities for strengthening editorial visibility, institutional communication, and alignment with international publishing standards. By doing so, the study contributes empirical evidence concerning a relatively underexplored group of journals and contributes to ongoing discussions regarding editorial transparency, ethical governance, and scholarly communication in emerging publishing contexts.

2. Methods

2.1. Study Design

An exploratory, descriptive, qualitative, documentary, comparative, and interpretative study was conducted on editorial transparency, ethical publishing practices, and open science mechanisms within scientific journals in the field of food science and technology. The study is situated within the domain of editorial meta-research, as it focuses on how journals communicate, regulate, and operationalise their policies regarding ethics, peer review, transparency, and responsible scientific communication, rather than on the evaluation of experimental scientific content itself (Kiran et al., 2023; Committee on Publication Ethics, 2017).

The study adopted a comparative and interpretative documentary assessment approach, focusing on the systematic evaluation of publicly available editorial information. Consistent with qualitative documentary research, the study followed a systematic process of identifying, organising, coding, comparing, and interpreting documentary evidence using predefined analytical criteria (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2023). This approach has previously been employed in scholarly communication research to examine transparency, editorial quality, and compliance with recognised publishing standards across academic journals (Kiran et al., 2023; Turcan et al., 2026).

2.2. Data Collection, Coding Procedure and Period of Analysis

Data collection was based exclusively on publicly accessible information available on the official websites of the journals analysed, including editorial policies, instructions for authors, peer review guidelines, ethical statements, editorial board information, publication models, and transparency declarations. The documentary review was conducted during the final months of 2025, and evidence was systematically recorded through screenshots and archived documentary records in order to ensure traceability, transparency, and replicability of the analysis (Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; European Association of Science Editors, 2024; Becerril et al., 2021).

The coding process was conducted through the systematic review of publicly available information published on journal websites. The analysis included the identification, classification, and interpretation of editorial policies, transparency mechanisms, ethical statements, peer-review information, and open science practices. Coding was performed using predefined decision rules based exclusively on explicit documentary evidence publicly available on each journal website. Each criterion was evaluated according to a binary coding system (+/−), allowing consistent comparison across all journals while minimising subjective interpretation, in accordance with qualitative documentary research procedures, transparent qualitative artifact analysis, and the adapted evaluation framework (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2023; Buckler & Gilmore, 2026; Kiran et al., 2023).

The evaluation was reviewed by both authors. The first author conducted the initial coding and data collection process, while the second author reviewed the evidence, coding decisions, and journal classifications. Differences in interpretation were discussed and resolved through consensus, leading to the refinement of several coding decisions before the final dataset was consolidated. Although no formal inter-rater reliability metrics were calculated, the review process undertaken by both authors contributed to improving the consistency and accuracy of the analysis.

To further strengthen methodological trustworthiness, the study incorporated several transparency strategies throughout the analytical process, including predefined coding rules, systematic documentary evidence collection, constant comparison among journals, collaborative review of coding decisions, explicit documentation of the analytical workflow, and visual representation of the coding procedure. These strategies are consistent with contemporary recommendations for qualitative artifact analysis aimed at improving transparency, traceability, methodological rigour, and trustworthiness (Buckler & Gilmore, 2026), while also aligning with established principles of qualitative documentary research (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2023).

The journal websites were examined during the study period, and the coding process was based exclusively on the information publicly available at the time of observation. Given the dynamic nature of editorial websites, policies, procedures, and transparency statements may have been modified after the completion of data collection. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as a representation of the journals' publicly available editorial practices during the study period rather than as an assessment of their current status.

The methodological approach prioritised publicly available editorial information because transparency and accessibility constitute central dimensions within contemporary debates surrounding open science, scientific governance, and responsible academic communication. The recent literature has further highlighted that transparency mechanisms increasingly function as indicators of legitimacy and institutional trust within scientific publishing ecosystems (Tamang, 2026; Teixeira, 2026).

The development of the evaluation instrument required a process of methodological adaptation to ensure consistency and comparability across the journals analysed.

The original framework proposed by Kiran et al. (2023) included 43 evaluation criteria. During the preliminary review, however, several of these criteria could not be applied consistently across the six journals analysed because the necessary information was not always publicly available or was reported in ways that made comparison difficult. In some journals, the evidence was explicit, whereas in others it was incomplete or unclear. Since the coding system used in this study was limited to binary classifications based on explicit public evidence (+/−), without intermediate categories, the application of such criteria would have required subjective interpretation and could have affected the consistency of the analysis.

In addition, some of the original criteria focused on business and organisational aspects of journal management, such as publication charges, revenue sources, advertising, and marketing activities. Although these dimensions are relevant for understanding journal sustainability, they were not central to the objectives of the present study, which focused on editorial ethics, peer review practices, and the communication of editorial information. For these reasons, the evaluation instrument was adapted and ultimately structured around 23 criteria grouped into three analytical dimensions that could be assessed consistently across all journals using explicit publicly available information. This adaptation also strengthened the transparency and reproducibility of the coding process, while remaining consistent with the methodological logic originally proposed by Kiran et al. (2023), qualitative documentary research procedures (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2023), and contemporary recommendations for transparent qualitative artifact analysis (Buckler & Gilmore, 2026).

Figure 1 illustrates the overall documentary analysis workflow followed throughout the study.

Figure 1 illustrates the overall documentary workflow followed throughout the study, from journal identification and selection to documentary data collection, coding, comparative analysis, and interpretation of the findings. The workflow summarises the sequential stages of the qualitative documentary assessment and highlights the systematic procedures adopted to ensure consistency, transparency, and methodological traceability during the analysis.

Following the overview of the documentary workflow presented in Figure 1, Figure 2 details the coding decision protocol used during data extraction and analysis. The figure summarises the predefined decision rules applied to classify each evaluation criterion according to the presence or absence of explicit publicly available documentary evidence on the official websites of the journals analysed.

As illustrated in Figure 2, each evaluation criterion was assessed exclusively on the basis of explicit documentary evidence identified on the official journal websites. Criteria were coded as compliant (+) when explicit public evidence was identified and as non-compliant (−) when no explicit evidence was available. The use of predefined binary decision rules contributed to ensuring consistency across all six journals while minimising subjective interpretation, thereby strengthening the transparency, traceability, and reproducibility of the documentary coding process.

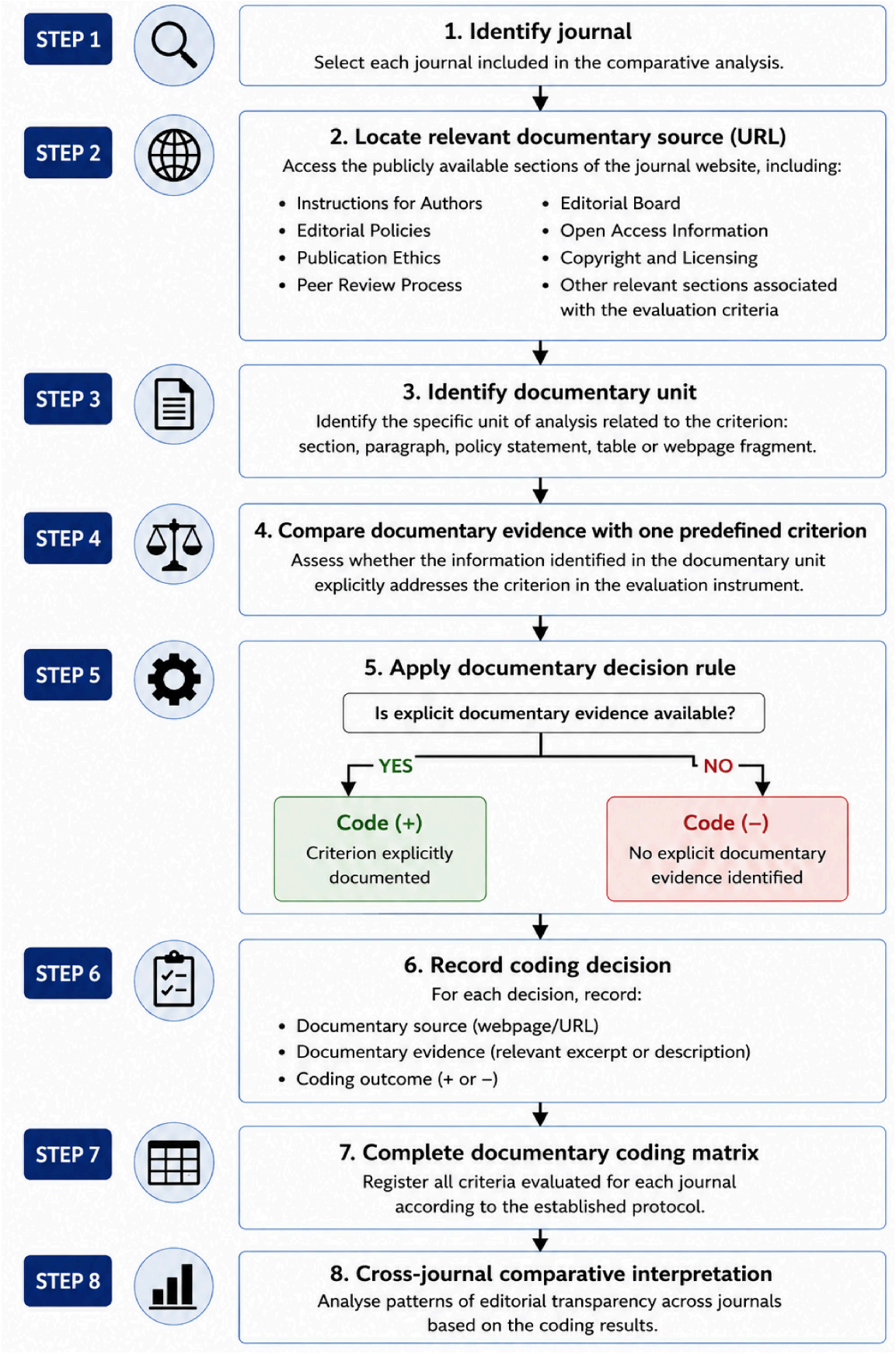


Figure 1. Documentary analysis workflow.

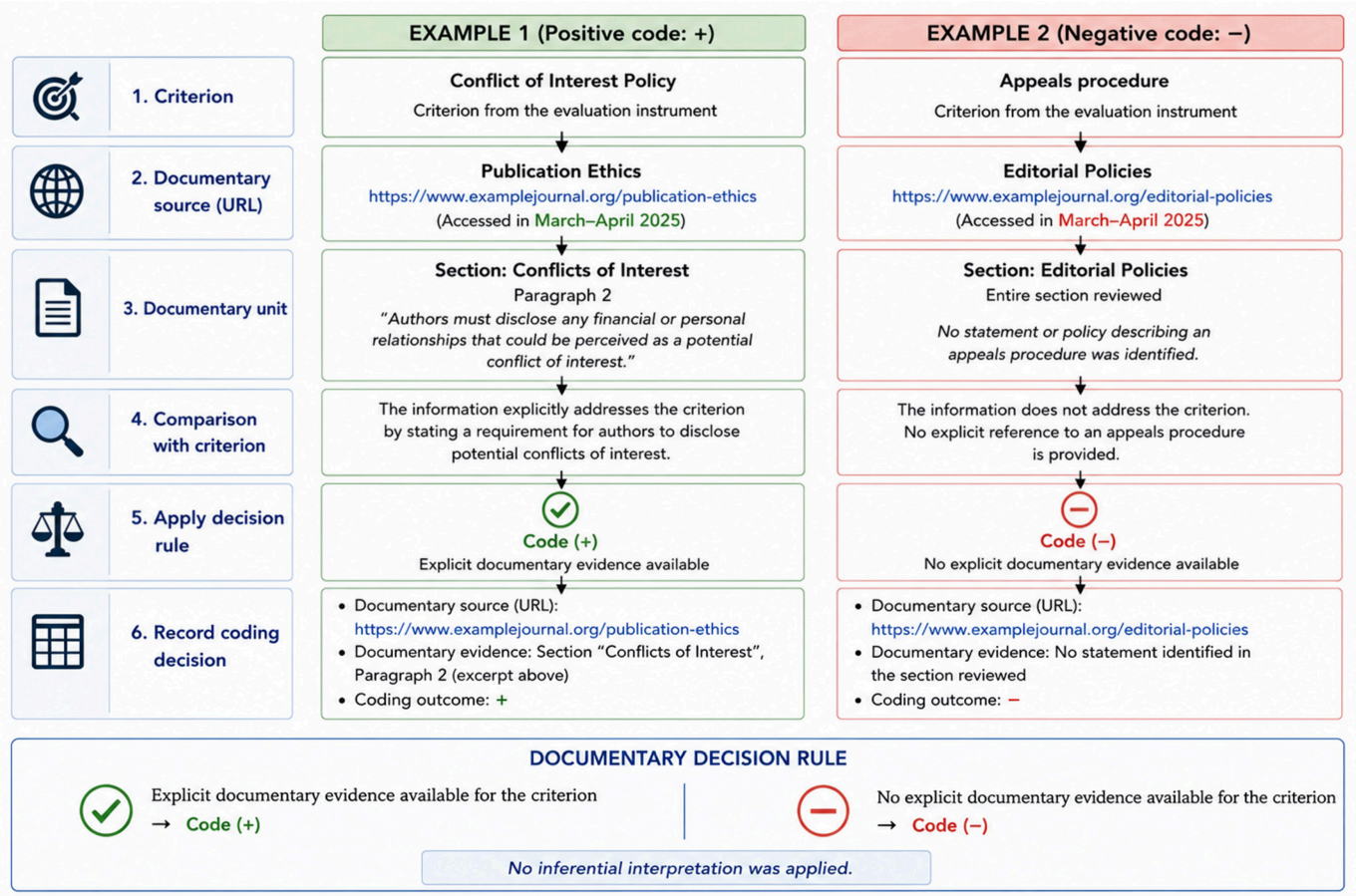


Figure 2. Coding decision protocol.

Having described both the overall documentary workflow (Figure 1) and the coding decision protocol applied during data extraction (Figure 2), Table 1 summarises how these methodological procedures align with recognised trustworthiness indicators for qualitative documentary and artifact analysis. Rather than introducing additional methodological steps, the table synthesises the strategies implemented throughout the study to strengthen transparency, traceability, consistency, and analytical rigour, following the recommendations of Hernández-Sampieri and Mendoza Torres (2023), Kiran et al. (2023), and Buckler and Gilmore (2026).

Table 1. Methodological trustworthiness strategies implemented during the documentary analysis.

Trustworthiness Strategy	Implementation in This Study	Manuscript Location
Transparent coding rules	Predefined binary coding protocol (+/−)	Figure 2
Audit trail	Screenshots and archived documentary records	Section 2.2
Documentary evidence	Official journal websites only	Section 2.2
Constant comparison	Cross-journal comparison	Figure 1
Collaborative review	Coding reviewed by the authors	Section 2.2
Reflexivity	Consensus discussion of disagreements	Section 2.2
Traceability	Documentary source recorded for every criterion	Figure 2
Replicability	Standardised 23-criterion evaluation instrument and explicit coding protocol	Section 2.2; Figure 2; Table 2

Note. Adapted from Buckler and Gilmore (2026), Hernández-Sampieri and Mendoza Torres (2023), and Kiran et al. (2023).

As shown in Table 1, the methodological procedures adopted throughout the study are consistent with internationally recognised recommendations for qualitative documentary and artifact analysis. The implementation of predefined coding rules, systematic

documentary evidence collection, collaborative review of coding decisions, constant comparison across journals, and transparent presentation of the analytical workflow collectively strengthen the trustworthiness, traceability, and reproducibility of the study (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2023; Kiran et al., 2023; Buckler & Gilmore, 2026). Although recent studies have adopted alternative approaches to documenting documentary coding procedures, including the use of extensive appendices and supplementary materials (e.g., Sánchez-Pita et al., 2025), the present study follows the methodological framework originally adopted for its design. Consequently, the methodological procedures implemented in this study may be considered consistent with established principles of qualitative documentary research while incorporating additional transparency strategies to further strengthen the credibility, traceability, and reproducibility of the analysis.

2.3. Journal Selection and Inclusion Criteria

The sample comprised six scientific journals, three from Peru and three from Mexico, selected through purposive criterion-based sampling. This strategy was adopted to construct a manageable and replicable comparative analysis within the scope of a qualitative study, prioritising depth of evaluation over breadth of cases (Kiran et al., 2023; Turcan et al., 2026). The selection was not intended to provide statistical representativeness but rather to enable an exploratory comparative assessment of editorial transparency, publication ethics, and open science practices across a manageable set of cases.

The journal selection process began with the identification of journals related to food science and technology through official journal portals, institutional publisher websites, national indexing systems, and publicly accessible academic databases. Journals were included according to five predefined criteria: (i) thematic relevance within food science and technology; (ii) public accessibility of editorial information through official digital platforms; (iii) explicit declaration of peer review processes; (iv) continuity and regularity of publication; and (v) institutional diversity, in order to incorporate different editorial and governance contexts, including universities, public research institutions, and specialised scientific entities (Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; European Association of Science Editors, 2024).

During the screening stage, numerous publications were excluded because they were not scientific journals, fell outside the thematic scope of the study, lacked sufficient publicly available editorial information to permit systematic documentary coding, did not provide accessible editorial policies through their official websites, or did not satisfy the predefined eligibility criteria. Among the journals that met the eligibility criteria, those selected provided the most complete and accessible publicly available editorial information, thereby enabling a systematic and comparable documentary evaluation across all cases.

The field of food science and technology was considered particularly relevant due to its connections with sustainability, agro-industrial innovation, food security, and regional scientific development. Within this context, specialised journals operate as important platforms for the dissemination and communication of applied scientific knowledge (Bresciani et al., 2026; Kumar et al., 2025).

Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted as exploratory and limited to the journals analysed rather than as representative of food science journals in Peru, Mexico, or Latin America as a whole.

The final sample comprised the following six journals:

Peru:

1. Scientia Agropecuaria (Universidad Nacional de Trujillo, 2025b);
2. Agroindustrial Science (Universidad Nacional de Trujillo, 2025a);
3. Revista de Investigaciones Altoandinas (Universidad Nacional del Altiplano, 2025).

Mexico:

4. Agrociencia (Colegio de Postgraduados, 2025);
5. Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Agrícolas (Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales & Agrícolas y Pecuarias, 2025);
6. Investigación y Desarrollo en Ciencia y Tecnología de Alimentos (Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, 2025).

2.4. Evaluation Instrument

An evaluation instrument consisting of 23 criteria was structured into three analytical dimensions:

(1) Editorial ethics;
(2) Peer review and equity;
(3) Transparency and communication of editorial information.

The instrument was adapted from international standards and guidelines promoted by COPE, EASE, and DOAJ, ensuring alignment with recognised frameworks associated with responsible scientific publishing and open science practices (European Association of Science Editors, 2024; Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; Becerril et al., 2021).

The instrument was designed to support qualitative comparative assessment of publicly available editorial information, with emphasis on the communication of editorial policies, transparency mechanisms, peer review practices, and responsible research governance rather than on quantitative performance indicators.

Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted as exploratory documentary assessments of publicly available editorial information rather than as definitive measures of editorial quality or institutional performance (Cai & Macfarlane, 2026; Roth et al., 2026; Teixeira, 2026).

Table 2 summarises the analytical dimensions, number of criteria, and coding categories used throughout the documentary assessment.

Table 2. Summary of the editorial evaluation instrument.

Dimension of Analysis	Description	Number of Criteria	Coding Outcomes
Editorial ethics	Assesses the existence and clarity of policies related to scientific integrity, originality, plagiarism, conflicts of interest, authorship, and the management of corrections or retractions.	7	Compliant (+)/non-compliant (−)/not applicable (N/A)
Peer review and equity	Analyses the transparency of the peer review process, the definition of editorial roles, the existence of guidelines for reviewers, and principles of equity in evaluation.	8	Compliant (+)/non-compliant (−)/not applicable (N/A)
Transparency and Communication of Editorial Information	Examines the public availability of editorial information, open access policies, digital preservation, scientific dissemination, and persistent identifiers.	8	Compliant (+)/non-compliant (−)/not applicable (N/A)
Total	—	23 criteria	—

Note. Coding outcomes: (+) explicit public evidence identified; (−) no explicit public evidence identified; (N/A) criterion not applicable.

2.5. Considerations and Limitations

This study evaluates the information publicly declared by the journals rather than the direct operational implementation of their editorial processes. The analysis therefore focuses on the public communication of editorial policies rather than on verifying whether those policies are implemented in editorial practice. Consequently, the absence of evidence on a journal's official website is interpreted as a limitation in editorial transparency available to authors, reviewers, and readers, which itself constitutes a relevant finding within

contemporary open science and scientific governance frameworks (European Association of Science Editors, 2024).

The analysis was based exclusively on information publicly available on journal websites during the study period. As editorial policies, transparency statements, and publication practices may evolve over time, subsequent modifications introduced after data collection are not reflected in the present results.

Additionally, although the evaluation process was reviewed by both authors and coding decisions were discussed and refined through consensus, no formal inter-rater reliability metrics were calculated. This should be considered a methodological limitation of the study.

Another limitation is that the study did not analyse the sustainability and funding models of the journals examined. Although all journals operated under open-access publishing schemes, differences may exist regarding institutional support, Diamond Open Access models, publication charges, and other funding mechanisms. As these factors may influence editorial resources, infrastructure, and communication practices, future research could explore their relationship with editorial governance and transparency.

Likewise, the study does not seek to establish definitive judgements regarding editorial quality, governance, or the effectiveness of editorial policies. As a qualitative, documentary, comparative, and interpretative study, its purpose is to examine how information related to editorial transparency, ethical commitments, peer review practices, and internationally recognised publishing standards is publicly communicated and made visible through journal websites. The findings should therefore be interpreted as exploratory assessments of publicly available editorial information rather than as definitive evaluations of journal performance, governance, policy implementation, or editorial effectiveness.

The purposive selection of six journals from Peru and Mexico was intended to support an exploratory comparative analysis and not to provide statistical representativeness. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised to all food science journals in either country, nor to Latin American scientific publishing systems as a whole. As a qualitative, documentary, comparative, and interpretative study, the objective was not statistical generalisation but rather the identification and interpretation of patterns, strengths, limitations, and emerging practices within the cases analysed.

Nevertheless, the journals examined operate within Peru and Mexico, two Spanish-speaking Latin American countries with active scientific publishing systems. Although the findings are exploratory, they may offer useful insights into editorial transparency, publication ethics, and open science practices within the regional context, while also providing a basis for future comparative studies involving larger samples and additional disciplinary fields.

3. Results

The results are presented in a descriptive and comparative manner according to the three analytical dimensions defined in the evaluation instrument: editorial ethics, peer review and equity, and transparency and communication of editorial information. The analysis is based on publicly accessible information available on the official websites of the six journals examined and synthesises observed compliance through qualitative comparative assessment by dimension (Kiran et al., 2023; European Association of Science Editors, 2024; Turcan et al., 2026).

Consistent with previous documentary assessments of journal transparency (Kiran et al., 2023), the results are presented through comparative qualitative interpretation rather than statistical inference.

Beyond reporting compliance across the 23 evaluation criteria, the results provide insight into how the journals analysed publicly communicate transparency, ethical standards, and editorial practices within contemporary open science environments. In this regard, the visibility and accessibility of editorial information may contribute to institutional trust, perceived legitimacy, and the accessibility of scientific knowledge within scholarly communication systems (Roth et al., 2026; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026).

3.1. Overall Results by Dimension

The six journals analysed exhibited comparatively higher levels of compliance within the dimension of editorial ethics, followed by peer review and equity. In contrast, the dimension of transparency and communication of editorial information displayed greater variability across the journals examined and more visible differences between the two national contexts. This pattern was observed in both Peruvian and Mexican journals, although with differing levels of systematisation and explicitness in the communication of editorial information (Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; Becerril et al., 2021).

The results suggest that the Mexican journals analysed displayed greater consistency regarding editorial transparency, institutional visibility, and dissemination-related practices. The Peruvian journals examined, meanwhile, appeared to demonstrate strengths in editorial ethics and responsible publishing policies, although with greater variability in the public communication of editorial procedures and editorial information.

These findings suggest that ethical publishing standards may be relatively consolidated across the journals analysed. However, differences remain regarding the visibility, accessibility, and communication of editorial information. From an exploratory qualitative perspective, these patterns may indicate opportunities for strengthening transparency practices, editorial communication, and the public accessibility of information related to peer review, publication ethics, and open science within the journals examined (Teixeira, 2026; Kwanya & Ateka, 2026).

3.2. Editorial Ethics

The editorial ethics dimension exhibited the highest level of compliance among the journals analysed. In most cases, explicit policies related to manuscript originality, prohibition of simultaneous submission, and plagiarism detection were publicly available. Several journals also appeared to provide ethical guidelines directed at authors, editors, and reviewers, suggesting a degree of alignment with internationally recognised standards of scientific publishing (European Association of Science Editors, 2024).

Among the Peruvian journals, Scientia Agropecuaria and Agroindustrial Science appeared to exhibit comparatively higher levels of explicitness regarding ethical policies, including statements related to originality, authorship criteria, plagiarism prevention, and responsible editorial conduct. Similarly, Revista de Investigaciones Altoandinas presented evidence of an ethical framework, although some criteria appeared to be communicated with less procedural detail, particularly those associated with editorial procedures and post-publication management.

Within the Mexican journals analysed, variation was observed regarding the level of formalisation and visibility of ethical policies. Some journals appeared to provide more extensive information concerning conflict-of-interest declarations, correction procedures, and editorial responsibilities, whereas others provided more limited information regarding retractions, ethical complaints, or formal mechanisms for editorial accountability.

Overall, the findings suggest that editorial ethics may represent a relative strength across the journals analysed. However, differences remain in the degree of explicitness, procedural detail, and public communication of ethical policies. From the perspective

of open science and editorial transparency, these variations may be relevant because the visibility of ethical standards can contribute to perceptions of trust, legitimacy, and accessibility within scientific communication systems. The recent literature has further highlighted that scientific integrity and transparency increasingly function as important reference points within contemporary publishing environments, particularly in contexts shaped by AI-assisted editorial systems and evolving peer review practices (Sharma & Sarode, 2026; Terry, 2026; Somigliana & Viganò, 2026).

Table 3 presents a comparative summary of the level of compliance observed in the editorial ethics dimension across the six journals analysed.

Table 3. Results of the Editorial Ethics Dimension.

Criterion (Editorial Ethics)	Scientia Agropecuaria (PE)	Agroindustrial Science (PE)	Revista de Investigaciones Altoandina (PE)	Agrociencia (MX)	Revista Mexicana de C.A (MX)	Investigación y Desarrollo en CYTA (MX)
Adherence to an editorial code of ethics	+	+	+	−	+	−
Originality policy/prohibition of simultaneous submission	+	+	+	+	+	+
Plagiarism detection procedures	+	+	+	−	+	+
Conflict of interest policy	+	+	+	−	−	−
Procedures for corrections/retractions	+	+	+	−	−	−
Research ethics requirements (humans/animals)	+	+	−	+	−	−
Authorship declaration/ contribution statements	+	+	+	−	−	−
Compliance rate (%)	100	100	85.7	28.6	42.9	28.6

Table note: The evaluation was based exclusively on publicly available information on the official websites of the journals during the period of analysis. The absence of explicit evidence was coded as "−". Coding outcomes: (+) explicit public evidence identified; (−) no explicit public evidence identified.

As shown in Table 3, the highest compliance levels within the editorial ethics dimension were observed in Scientia Agropecuaria and Agroindustrial Science, both achieving full compliance (100%) across the criteria evaluated. Revista de Investigaciones Altoandinas also exhibited a comparatively high level of compliance (85.7%). In contrast, the Mexican journals displayed lower compliance rates, ranging from 28.6% to 42.9%. The largest differences were observed in relation to editorial codes of ethics, conflict-of-interest policies, correction and retraction procedures, and other mechanisms associated with the public communication of editorial accountability.

From an editorial transparency perspective, these differences may be interpreted not only as variations in the existence of ethical policies, but also in the extent to which such policies are made visible and accessible to authors, reviewers, and readers. Since the present study evaluates publicly available information, the findings suggest that some journals communicate their ethical commitments more explicitly than others. This distinction may be particularly relevant within open science environments, where transparency increasingly depends not only on the existence of editorial standards, but also on their public visibility and accessibility.

3.3. Peer Review and Equity

Peer review constitutes one of the central dimensions of scientific publishing and, simultaneously, one of the most heterogeneous areas identified in the analysis. Although all journals examined publicly declare the use of peer review processes, substantial differences exist regarding the clarity, transparency, and procedural detail communicated through their official platforms (Kiran et al., 2023; Drozdz & Ladomery, 2024).

From the perspective of open science and editorial governance, the visibility of peer review procedures directly influences perceptions of fairness, accountability, and scientific legitimacy. Consequently, the existence of peer review alone is insufficient if journals do not clearly communicate how evaluation processes operate and under what ethical conditions they are conducted (Roth et al., 2026; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026).

According to the comparative assessment, Mexican publications—particularly Agrociencia and Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Agrícolas—generally provide more detailed descriptions of editorial workflows, peer review stages, and editorial responsibilities. In contrast, several Peruvian journals provide more limited information regarding evaluation criteria, reviewer selection, timelines, and conflict management procedures (European Association of Science Editors, 2024; Cicero & Sarlo, 2026).

Only a minority of journals publish detailed reviewer guidelines or explicitly communicate procedures related to conflicts of interest and reviewer accountability. Recent debates surrounding AI-assisted peer review, editorial automation, and responsible use of generative AI in editorial processes further reinforce the importance of transparency, traceability, and governance safeguards within evolving publishing ecosystems (Committee on Publication Ethics, 2021; Begagić et al., 2026; De Cassai et al., 2026; Sharma & Sarode, 2026; Tsatsakis et al., 2026).

The finings suggest that peer review remains an area requiring stronger transparency and governance practices within emerging scientific publishing ecosystems. Table 4 summarises the comparative results obtained for the peer review and equity dimension.

Table 4. Results of the Peer Review and Equity dimension.

Criterion (Peer Review and Equity)	Scientia Agropecuaria (PE)	Agroindustrial Science (PE)	Revista de Investigaciones Altoandina (PE)	Agrociencia (MX)	Revista Mexicana de C.A. (MX)	Investigación y Desarrollo en CYTA (MX)
Explicit declaration of peer review	+	+	+	+	+	+
Type of review clearly indicated (single-blind/double-blind)	+	+	+	+	+	–
Description of the stages of the review process	+	+	–	+	+	–
Evaluation criteria for reviewers	+	+	–	–	+	–
Specific guidelines or instructions for reviewers	+	+	–	–	–	–
Declaration of estimated review timelines	+	–	–	–	–	–
Management of conflicts of interest in peer review	+	+	–	–	–	–
Defined editorial roles and responsibilities	+	+	+	+	+	–
Compliance rate (%)	100	87.5	37.5	50	62.5	12.5

Table note: The evaluation was based exclusively on publicly available information on the official websites of the journals during the period of analysis. The absence of explicit evidence was coded as "–". Coding outcomes: (+) explicit public evidence identified; (–) no explicit public evidence identified.

As shown in Table 4, compliance levels ranged from 12.5% to 100% across the journals analysed. The highest levels of compliance were observed in Scientia Agropecuaria (100%) and Agroindustrial Science (87.5%), whereas the lowest level was identified in Investigación y Desarrollo en Ciencia y Tecnología de Alimentos (12.5%). The largest differences were associated with reviewer guidelines, review timelines, conflict-of-interest management, and the communication of evaluation criteria. While all journals publicly declared the use of peer review, substantial variation was observed regarding the extent to which review procedures were documented and made accessible. These findings may suggest differences in the visibility and communication of peer-review practices rather than differences in the quality of the review process itself.

The variation observed in the communication of editorial evaluation procedures may also highlight the value of standardised terminology frameworks such as the NISO Peer Review Terminology Standard (National Information Standards Organization, 2023). By promoting consistent definitions for evaluation models, editorial roles, and assessment processes, such frameworks may facilitate greater transparency, comparability, and understanding of editorial practices across journals. Within the context of this study, the use of standardised terminology may contribute to improving the visibility and interpretation of evaluation procedures communicated through journal websites.

3.4. Transparency and Communication of Editorial Information

The dimension of transparency and communication of editorial information presents the greatest variability among the journals analysed. Although open access publication models and the use of persistent identifiers such as DOIs are widely adopted across the sample, substantial differences remain regarding digital preservation policies, editorial communication strategies, accessibility of governance information, and the visibility of dissemination mechanisms (Directory of Open Access Journals, 2022; European Association of Science Editors, 2024; Becerril et al., 2021).

Within the contemporary context of open science, these practices acquire increasing relevance because they directly affect the accessibility, traceability, and long-term circulation of scientific knowledge. Within the scope of this study, transparency refers to the visibility, accessibility, and public communication of editorial information rather than to the direct evaluation of policy implementation or effectiveness. Consequently, transparency-related mechanisms should not be interpreted merely as technical editorial components, but as governance structures shaping institutional legitimacy, public trust, and access to scientific communication systems. From this perspective, editorial transparency increasingly functions as a mechanism through which scientific knowledge becomes socially accessible, institutionally validated, and internationally integrated within broader academic communication networks (Roth et al., 2026; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026).

Mexican publications generally demonstrated comparatively stronger performance in this dimension, particularly regarding the visibility of indexation information, licensing policies, digital archiving mechanisms, and dissemination-related practices. In particular, Agrociencia presented a higher level of availability, organisation, and clarity of the editorial information accessible to authors and readers, based on the criteria evaluated in this study (Stojanovski & Mofardin, 2025; Kwanya & Ateka, 2026).

In contrast, Scientia Agropecuaria demonstrates important advances in open access practices and international visibility. However, similarly to other Peruvian journals analysed, opportunities for improvement remain regarding the explicit communication of digital preservation policies, dissemination strategies, and governance-related information. In several cases, limited public evidence was identified concerning long-term preservation systems, metadata visibility, or formal dissemination procedures. From the perspective adopted in this study, the absence of publicly accessible information constitutes a relevant transparency limitation, regardless of whether such practices may exist internally within the journals (Grumezescu, 2026).

Recent discussions on decentralised science, digital governance, and AI-mediated scientific communication further reinforce the strategic importance of transparency infrastructures within contemporary publishing systems. In this context, mechanisms related to metadata accessibility, long-term digital preservation, editorial traceability, and governance visibility increasingly operate as central components of scientific legitimacy and accessibility (Blocher, 2026; Tamang, 2026; Hosseini et al., 2025).

Overall, these findings suggest that transparency and the public communication of editorial information continue to represent one of the principal challenges for scientific publishing systems operating in emerging academic contexts. Within broader discussions surrounding intellectual property, scientific governance, and open science, the visibility of editorial policies, dissemination infrastructures, and access-related mechanisms increasingly functions as a central dimension in the legitimacy and long-term sustainability of scientific communication systems.

Table 5 presents a comparative synthesis of the results corresponding to the dimension of transparency and the public communication of editorial information.

Table 5. Results of the Transparency and Communication of Editorial Information.

Criterion (Transparency and the Public Communication of Editorial Information)	Scientia Agropecuaria (PE)	Agroindustrial Science (PE)	Revista de Investigaciones Altoandina (PE)	Agrociencia (MX)	Revista Mexicana de C.A (MX)	Investigación y Desarrollo en CYTA (MX)
Open access clearly declared	+	+	+	+	+	+
Usage licence (Creative Commons or other)	+	+	+	+	+	–
Visible indexation information	+	+	+	+	+	–
Digital preservation policy	+	–	–	+	+	–
Use of persistent identifiers (DOIs)	+	+	+	+	+	+
Clear information on the editorial board	+	+	+	+	+	–
Accessible editorial contact information	+	+	+	+	+	+
Scientific dissemination/ visibility strategies	–	–	–	+	–	–
Compliance rate (%)	87.5	75	75	100	87.5	37.5

Table note: The evaluation was based exclusively on publicly available information on the official websites of the journals during the period of analysis. The absence of explicit evidence was coded as "−". Coding outcomes: (+) explicit public evidence identified; (−) no explicit public evidence identified.

As shown in Table 5, compliance levels ranged from 37.5% to 100% across the journals analysed. Agrociencia achieved the highest level of compliance (100%), whereas Investigación y Desarrollo en Ciencia y Tecnología de Alimentos obtained the lowest score (37.5%). The largest differences were observed in digital preservation policies and scientific dissemination strategies. These findings may suggest that variation among journals is influenced not only by the existence of editorial practices but also by the extent to which such practices are publicly communicated and made accessible.

Within the context of open science, the public communication of editorial information may contribute to the accessibility, traceability, and visibility of scientific knowledge. Consequently, differences identified in this dimension may be interpreted as differences in the communication of editorial information rather than direct evidence of differences in policy implementation or effectiveness (Roth et al., 2026; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026).

3.5. Comparison Between Peruvian and Mexican Journals

The cross-country comparative analysis shows that both samples share common strengths in editorial ethics but differ in the degree of systematisation and visibility of editorial processes. Mexican journals tended to present more structured and consistent policies in the dimensions of peer review and, particularly, transparency and communication of editorial information. By contrast, Peruvian journals demonstrated significant progress, albeit with greater internal heterogeneity across publications (Horbach & Halffman, 2018).

These differences may be interpreted as reflecting varying levels of visibility, formalisation, and public communication of editorial information among the journals analysed. However, the present study does not allow conclusions regarding the institutional, financial, or organisational factors that may explain these differences. Future research could explore

the extent to which editorial structures, institutional support, or journal trajectories may influence the communication of editorial practices.

Note on Tables and Figures

Tables 3–5 present a synthesis of results by dimension and allow for a comparative visualisation of the level of compliance observed for each journal. These tables were developed using the final evaluation instrument composed of 23 criteria.

To provide an integrated visual comparison of the results, Figure 3 summarises the documentary compliance percentages obtained by each journal across the three analytical dimensions, together with the overall documentary compliance calculated from the 23 evaluation criteria.

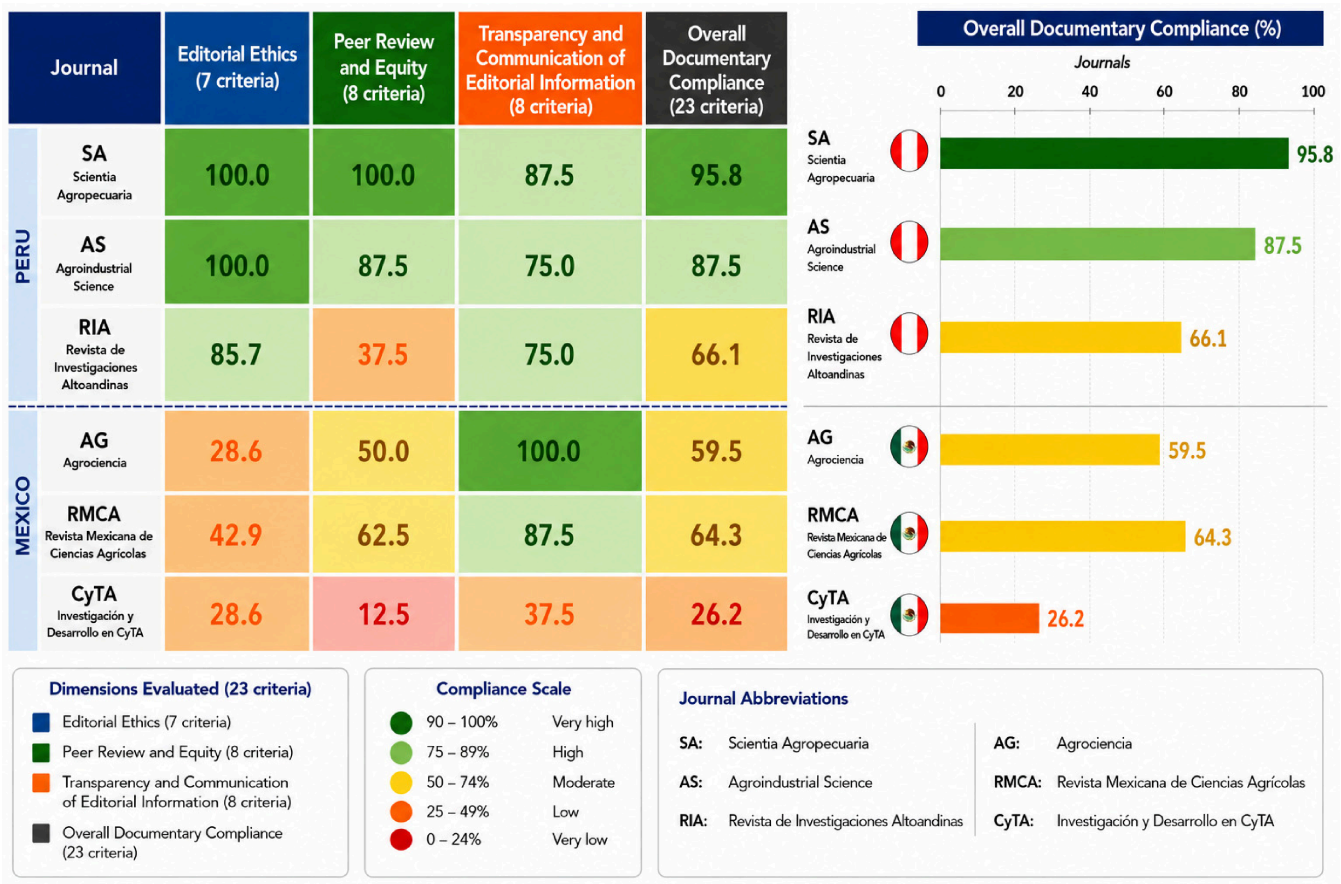


Figure 3. Comparative Documentary Compliance across the Three Editorial Transparency Dimensions in Mexican and Peruvian Food Science Journals. Note. Percentages represent the proportion of evaluation criteria explicitly documented by each journal within each analytical dimension. Overall documentary compliance corresponds to the proportion of the 23 evaluation criteria explicitly documented in publicly accessible journal webpages during the observation period. The colour scale applied to the percentages and the overall compliance bars represents the level of documentary compliance: dark green (90–100%, very high), light green (75–89%, high), yellow (50–74%, moderate), orange (25–49%, low), and red (0–24%, very low).

Building upon the comparative results presented in Figure 3, Table 6 presents the original evaluation framework adapted from Kiran et al. (2023), comprising 43 criteria distributed across three analytical dimensions: editorial ethics, peer review and equity, and transparency and communication of editorial information. During the methodological adaptation process, the framework was reduced to 23 criteria, which constituted the final evaluation instrument applied in this study.

Table 6. Original evaluation framework adapted from Kiran et al. (2023) (43 criteria).

Dimension	Evaluation Criteria
Editorial ethics	Explicit declaration of editorial ethics
	Explicit adherence to COPE or equivalent organisations
	Manuscript originality policy
	Explicit anti-plagiarism policy
	Declared use of plagiarism-detection software
	Clear definition of authorship
	Policy on author contributions
	Declaration of conflicts of interest
	Policy on corrections and retractions
	Procedure for ethical complaints
	Ethical responsibilities of editors
	Ethical responsibilities of authors
	Ethical responsibilities of reviewers
	Policy on duplicate publications
	Policy on data fabrication or falsification
Peer review and equity	Explicit declaration of the use of peer review
	Type of peer review specified (double-blind, single-blind, open)
	Clear description of the peer review process
	Editorial process stages described
	Defined editorial roles
	Evaluation criteria for reviewers
	Specific guidelines for reviewers
	Information on review timelines
	Reviewer selection policy
	Management of conflicts of interest in peer review
	Editorial decision-making mechanisms
	Communication of decisions to authors
	Appeal procedures
	Equity and non-discrimination policy
Transparency and communication of editorial information	Open access clearly declared
	Type of Creative Commons licence specified
	Clear information on publication costs
	Digital preservation policy
	Use of persistent identifiers (DOIs)
	Indexation declared in databases
	Visible editorial contact information
	Editorial board with institutional affiliation
	Institutional diversity of the editorial board
	Publication frequency and regularity
	Scientific dissemination strategies
	Research data policy
	Archiving and access to previous issues
	Journal statistical information (optional)

The instrument was designed to facilitate systematic comparative analysis and methodological transparency within the context of documentary meta-research on scholarly communication and open science practices. From this perspective, the evaluation framework was intended not only to assess publicly communicated editorial practices but also to examine how journals make information related to governance structures, ethical standards, peer review mechanisms, and access-related policies visible and accessible to authors, reviewers, and readers (Roth et al., 2026; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026).

Additionally, the instrument incorporates dimensions increasingly associated with contemporary debates on scientific governance, intellectual property, and transparency infrastructures, particularly regarding accessibility of editorial information, procedural visi-

bility, and responsible scientific communication practices within open science environments (Hosseini et al., 2025; Blocher, 2026).

Table 6 is presented to provide methodological transparency regarding the adaptation process undertaken in this study. The original framework proposed by Kiran et al. (2023), comprising 43 criteria, served as an important starting point for the development of the evaluation instrument and provided a structured basis for examining editorial transparency, peer review practices, ethical publishing standards, and open science mechanisms.

As discussed in the methodology section, only 23 criteria were retained for the final instrument because they could be assessed consistently across all journals using explicit publicly available evidence. Nevertheless, the original framework remains a valuable reference for future research, as many of the excluded criteria address organisational, economic, and managerial dimensions of scholarly publishing that were beyond the scope of the present study.

The presentation of the original framework allows readers to understand the adaptation process undertaken and highlights opportunities for future investigations. In particular, the framework may support the progressive development of more comprehensive evaluation models capable of incorporating additional dimensions related to editorial sustainability, funding models, publication charges, governance structures, and other emerging challenges within open access publishing. In this sense, Table 6 not only documents the methodological foundation of the present study but also provides a basis for future comparative research on scientific publishing, editorial transparency, and open science practices within food science journals and related disciplinary fields.

4. Discussion

The present study provides a qualitative and comparative analysis of the editorial practices of six food science and technology journals from Peru and Mexico, focusing on their degree of alignment with international scientific publishing standards associated with editorial ethics, peer review transparency, and open science practices. Based on the examination of publicly accessible editorial information, the findings contribute to the field of meta-research in scientific publishing by examining the public communication of editorial policies rather than their operational implementation.

Beyond the technical evaluation of editorial criteria, the findings may be interpreted as illustrating how the journals analysed publicly communicate information related to the circulation, validation, and accessibility of scientific knowledge within emerging academic ecosystems. From this perspective, editorial transparency becomes closely connected to broader contemporary debates surrounding intellectual property, open science, and access to scientific knowledge (Blocher, 2026; Vetulani-Cęgiel & de Medeiros Albrecht, 2026).

4.1. Comparison with Previous Studies and International Standards

The general pattern identified in this study—stronger performance in editorial ethics, intermediate levels in peer review transparency, and comparatively weaker performance in transparency and communication of editorial information—is consistent with findings reported in previous meta-scientific research. Similar tendencies were identified by Kiran et al. (2023), who employed a documentary evaluation approach to analyse editorial transparency and governance practices in academic journals. Comparable documentary approaches have also been applied in recent studies examining editorial transparency in open access journals (e.g., Sánchez-Pita et al., 2025), although using different methodological reporting strategies. Their findings revealed that ethical principles tend to be more explicitly formalised than procedural aspects related to editorial governance, dissemination strategies, and transparency mechanisms. This convergence may be interpreted as

suggesting that the journals analysed tend to formalise ethical principles more explicitly than procedural aspects related to editorial governance, dissemination strategies, and the communication of editorial information.

The numerical findings also show that documentary compliance was not uniformly associated with one national context across all dimensions. The Peruvian journals recorded comparatively high compliance in editorial ethics, ranging from 85.7% to 100%, whereas the Mexican journals ranged from 28.6% to 42.9% in this dimension. In contrast, the transparency and communication dimension showed stronger results for Agrociencia (100%) and Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Agrícolas (87.5%), while Investigación y Desarrollo en Ciencia y Tecnología de Alimentos obtained 37.5%. Peer review displayed the widest variation across the sample, ranging from 12.5% to 100%. These contrasts suggest that the public documentation of editorial practices varies by journal and analytical dimension rather than following a uniform country-level pattern.

From an international perspective, these results may be interpreted as indicating a partial but uneven adoption of internationally recognised publishing frameworks promoted by organisations such as COPE, EASE, and DOAJ. While several journals appear to demonstrate visible alignment with ethical publishing standards and open access principles, important differences remain regarding the accessibility, explicitness, and systematic communication of editorial governance mechanisms (Becerril et al., 2021; Cicero & Sarlo, 2026; Turcan et al., 2026). A comparable situation was reported by Stojanovski and Mofardin (2025) in their analysis of the Croatian diamond open access landscape, where journals exhibited differing levels of visibility and formalisation regarding editorial and publishing practices. Although the institutional and geographical contexts differ, both studies may suggest that the communication of editorial information remains uneven across scholarly publishing environments.

These findings may be relevant to contemporary discussions on open science, where transparency, ethical governance, and responsible data-sharing practices are increasingly discussed as factors that may contribute to scientific credibility, accessibility, and public trust (Malsch et al., 2026). Within the journals analysed, editorial policies, peer review governance, dissemination infrastructures, and accessibility practices may be interpreted as elements associated with the public communication of scientific information. The recent literature has further emphasised that editorial standards and transparency policies may contribute to perceptions of credibility, trust, and accessibility within scientific communication systems (Roth et al., 2026; Cai & Macfarlane, 2026; Teixeira, 2026).

4.2. Interpretation of Differences Between Countries

The comparative analysis between Peruvian and Mexican journals reveals both shared structural challenges and relevant differences in the communication of editorial governance practices. Mexican journals tended to provide more detailed descriptions of peer review processes, editorial workflows, evaluation stages, and dissemination-related mechanisms. This pattern may be interpreted as reflecting differences in the public communication of editorial information among the journals analysed.

By contrast, the Peruvian journals analysed demonstrated strong ethical commitment, particularly regarding originality policies, plagiarism prevention, authorship responsibility, and ethical publishing principles. Nevertheless, greater heterogeneity is observed in the public communication of evaluation criteria, reviewer guidelines, editorial timelines, and governance-related information. Based on the documentary evidence examined, these differences may be interpreted as variations in the visibility and communication of editorial practices rather than direct evidence of differences in editorial quality or effectiveness.

The present study does not allow conclusions regarding the institutional, financial, organisational, or other causal factors underlying the documentary compliance levels observed across the journals analysed. Rather, its purpose was to compare how editorial information is publicly communicated according to a predefined documentary framework. Consequently, the observed differences should not be interpreted as evidence of differences in editorial quality, organisational performance, or the actual implementation of editorial policies. Future research could build upon these findings by investigating the extent to which institutional support, editorial structures, journal trajectories, funding models, or participation in international indexation systems may explain why documentary compliance patterns differ across journals and publishing contexts.

Future research could explore the extent to which institutional support, editorial structures, journal trajectories, funding models, or participation in international indexation systems may influence the communication of editorial information and governance practices. From the perspective of intellectual property and open science, these findings may be considered relevant because they suggest that access to scientific knowledge can be influenced not only by publication models themselves, but also by the visibility and accessibility of editorial information. Within the journals analysed, more extensive communication of editorial policies and procedures may contribute to greater transparency and accessibility for authors, reviewers, and readers. Conversely, limited public information regarding editorial processes may reduce the visibility of governance practices and make their evaluation more difficult (Hosseini et al., 2025; Tamang, 2026).

These findings reinforce the idea that the journals analysed may be evaluated not only through citation metrics or indexation status, but also through the transparency, accessibility, and communication of editorial information that support scholarly communication within open science environments.

4.3. Editorial Transparency, Communication and Emerging Challenges

The dimension of transparency and communication of editorial information constitutes the principal area for improvement identified across the journals analysed, as reflected in the comparatively lower levels of compliance observed within this dimension. Limited public availability of information regarding digital preservation policies, dissemination strategies, licensing conditions, and governance-related procedures reveals differences between internationally recognised transparency standards and the editorial information publicly communicated by some of the journals analysed (Becerril et al., 2021; Kwanya & Ateka, 2026; Stojanovski & Mofardin, 2025; Braillon et al., 2026).

Within the broader context of open science, these limitations acquire particular relevance because transparency increasingly functions as a mechanism through which scientific knowledge becomes accessible, traceable, and institutionally legitimised. Consequently, deficiencies in the communication of editorial governance practices may affect the visibility and accessibility of editorial information available to authors, reviewers, and readers.

Importantly, the absence of publicly available information does not necessarily imply the absence of editorial practices themselves, but rather limitations in communicative transparency. However, within contemporary scientific publishing ecosystems, the visibility of editorial procedures increasingly operates as an indicator that may contribute to perceptions of quality, accountability, and institutional legitimacy, particularly in relation to international indexation standards and open science requirements (Cicero & Sarlo, 2026; Roth et al., 2026).

From the perspective of intellectual property and access to scientific knowledge, transparency-related mechanisms also influence how scientific information circulates, becomes discoverable, and acquires institutional recognition. In this sense, editorial trans-

parency may be understood not only as an administrative requirement, but also as part of the communication infrastructure supporting contemporary scientific publishing systems.

4.4. Implications for Scientific Communication

Beyond their function as dissemination platforms, the journals analysed may also contribute to broader discussions on scientific communication and open science, particularly through the visibility of editorial policies, ethical standards, and peer review procedures. Editorial transparency, clarity of publication policies, accessibility of peer review procedures, and explicit ethical guidelines may contribute to the development of responsible scientific practices and to the strengthening of editorial literacy within academic communities.

Within emerging scientific ecosystems, journals frequently operate not only as publication channels, but also as institutional spaces where researchers learn standards related to scientific integrity, authorship responsibility, peer review, and open science practices. Consequently, the communication of editorial governance mechanisms becomes particularly significant for shaping scientific culture and promoting responsible participation in international academic communication systems.

The challenges identified in the journals analysed do not appear to be exclusive to Peru and Mexico. Recent studies conducted in other contexts, including Africa (Kwanya & Ateka, 2026), Croatia (Stojanovski & Mofardin, 2025), and Eastern Europe (Turcan et al., 2026), have reported similar concerns regarding editorial visibility, governance practices, and the communication of editorial policies. This convergence may suggest that the communication of editorial information remains an important challenge across diverse emerging publishing environments.

At the same time, the recent literature has emphasised that the existence of editorial policies does not necessarily guarantee their effective implementation in practice (Braillon et al., 2026; Somigliana & Viganò, 2026). Consequently, the contribution of the present study lies not in evaluating the operational effectiveness of editorial processes, but rather in examining the extent to which journals publicly communicate the information necessary for authors, reviewers, and readers to understand and evaluate those processes.

In this regard, strengthening editorial practices extends beyond improving publication quality alone; it also influences training processes, scientific collaboration, institutional trust, and regional integration within broader open science networks. From the perspective of scientific communication, greater visibility of editorial procedures may facilitate a better understanding of how scientific knowledge is evaluated, validated, and disseminated.

The adoption of standardised terminology frameworks, such as the NISO Peer Review Terminology Standard (National Information Standards Organization, 2023), may further contribute to improving consistency, clarity, and comparability in the communication of editorial evaluation processes across journals. Recent evidence from journals associated with the European Association of Science Editors has similarly highlighted the diversity of peer review models and the importance of transparent communication of editorial procedures, reinforcing the relevance of standardisation initiatives within contemporary scholarly communication systems (Malički et al., 2026). In contexts increasingly affected by scientific misinformation and public mistrust of expertise, the accessibility of editorial information may therefore contribute to strengthening the credibility and interpretability of scientific communication (Hosseini et al., 2025; Schwoerer, 2026).

4.5. Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight the importance of strengthening the communication of editorial governance practices within the journals analysed and similar publishing contexts. While the journals examined demonstrate important advances in editorial ethics

and open access practices, challenges remain regarding peer review transparency, digital preservation, dissemination strategies, and the public visibility of editorial information.

From a methodological perspective, this study confirms the usefulness of comparative qualitative analyses supported by transparent and replicable evaluation instruments for examining the public communication of editorial information. In particular, the findings support the value of documentary approaches previously employed in scholarly communication research and qualitative documentary analysis (e.g., Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2023; Kiran et al., 2023; Buckler & Gilmore, 2026) for examining how journals communicate editorial policies, governance structures, and open science practices through publicly available information.

The challenges identified in the journals analysed do not appear to be exclusive to Peru and Mexico. Similar concerns regarding editorial visibility, governance practices, sustainability, and communication of editorial policies have recently been reported in other contexts, including Africa (Kwanya & Ateka, 2026), Croatia (Stojanovski & Mofardin, 2025), and Eastern Europe (Turcan et al., 2026). This convergence may suggest that the communication of editorial information remains an important challenge across diverse emerging publishing environments, despite differences in national contexts and institutional structures.

At the same time, the findings suggest that some of these challenges may be addressed through relatively low-cost interventions, including clearer reviewer guidelines, more explicit conflict-of-interest procedures, publicly accessible descriptions of peer review processes, and more visible digital preservation policies. Such measures may improve the accessibility and transparency of editorial information without necessarily requiring major structural reforms.

In many emerging publishing environments, financial and institutional constraints continue to represent important challenges for editorial development. Nevertheless, the results suggest that not all improvements depend exclusively on increased funding. From a strategic perspective, journals may benefit from the use of planning and management tools that help prioritise high-impact interventions according to available resources and organisational capacities. This may be particularly relevant in contexts where scientific and editorial funding remains limited and must be allocated efficiently.

Furthermore, in an era increasingly characterised by scientific misinformation, rapid digital dissemination, and growing public scrutiny of scientific evidence, the precision, rigour, and visibility of editorial processes acquire additional relevance. In this context, strategic planning may contribute not only to improving editorial performance but also to strengthening the credibility, interpretability, and trustworthiness of scientific communication.

Ultimately, this study suggests that strengthening the communication of editorial information depends not only on the adoption of editorial policies but also on their clear and accessible communication. This may be particularly relevant for journals operating in emerging publishing environments seeking to improve their visibility, credibility, and integration within international scholarly communication systems.

5. Conclusions

This study provides a qualitative and comparative assessment of the public communication of editorial practices in six food science and technology journals from Peru and Mexico. The findings suggest that editorial ethics is relatively well established across the journals analysed, while greater variation was observed in peer review transparency and the communication of editorial information, particularly regarding digital preservation, dissemination strategies, and governance-related procedures.

The study contributes to scholarly communication research by applying a documentary and comparative approach to the analysis of publicly available editorial information. The findings suggest that the visibility and accessibility of editorial policies remain important dimensions of scientific communication and may influence how editorial processes are understood and evaluated by authors, reviewers, and readers.

Future research could expand this approach through larger samples, additional disciplinary fields, longitudinal designs, and comparative studies in other regions. Future studies may also examine how different funding and sustainability models influence editorial governance, transparency practices, and the communication of editorial information. Such efforts may contribute to a deeper understanding of how editorial governance practices evolve within contemporary scientific publishing environments.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, M.M.C.E.; methodology, M.M.C.E.; validation, M.M.C.E. and L.G.-M.; formal analysis, M.M.C.E. and N.G.C.Q.; investigation, M.M.C.E., N.G.C.Q. and A.G.C.; data curation, M.M.C.E., N.G.C.Q. and A.G.C.; writing—original draft preparation, M.M.C.E.; writing—review and editing, M.M.C.E., L.G.-M., N.G.C.Q. and A.G.C.; visualization, M.M.C.E. and L.G.-M.; supervision, M.M.C.E.; project administration, M.M.C.E. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by Universidad del Valle de México-Campus Querétaro, México and Instituto Científico de Investigación y Desarrollo (ICIDES), Sevilla, Spain.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to the use of strictly public domain data. The study analyzed publicly accessible editorial policies, website metadata, and institutional communications from scientific journals. This research did not involve direct intervention with human subjects, nor the disclosure of personally identifiable information, as all evaluated data are part of the public record of the respective publishing institutions.

Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors on request.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no competing interests.

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