

# Invasion of the journal snatchers: How indexed journals are falling into questionable hands

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## Abstract

In recent years, a substantial number of established journals have received buyout offers from obscure entities, with some journals being acquired. Despite mounting circumstantial evidence of irregular behaviour exhibited by these journals post-acquisition, comprehensive analyses on this matter are lacking. To address this gap, this article examines the practices of *Oxbridge Publishing House Ltd.*, a company registered in the UK in 2022. Through an analysis of publicly available documentation, it becomes apparent that this entity is part of a complex network of recently established companies. Since 2020 this network has acquired, with the help of intermediary firms, at least 36 scholarly journals originally published in countries such Spain (7), United Kingdom (7), USA (5), India (4), Turkey (4), among others. Targeting journals indexed in prestigious scientific databases like Web of Science and Scopus, many of these journals see significant transformations upon acquisition, such as the introduction or substantial escalation of publication fees, often coupled with increases in publication volumes. This increase stems from a surge in contributions originating outside the journal's original academic community. Their disregard for proper publishing standards is evident in their widespread use of fake DOIs or the appropriation of DOIs from unrelated documents. Drawing parallels to the film *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, we refer to journals caught in this predicament as *pod journals*. This type of predatory publishing practice not only contributes to over-publication but also disenfranchises legitimate academic communities and poses a threat to academic bibliodiversity.

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**Version 1.** 29 January 2025.

This preprint has not been externally reviewed prior to publication. Feedback welcome.

## Introduction

In recent years, an increasing number of academic journals are being acquired by questionable publishers (Cabezas-Clavijo et al., 2023; Delgado-López-Cozar & Martín-Martín, 2024; Smut Clyde, 2023). Although these type of journal buyouts are apparently on the rise, with buying companies especially active after the publication of new editions of the SJR and JCR journal rankings, for the most part they take place with minimal publicity and public discussion.

Below, we provide a list of both successful and unsuccessful buyout attempts involving journals that have publicly disclosed this information. It is reasonable to assume that a larger number of buyout offers (or finalized sales) may have occurred, but information about these transactions has not been made publicly available.

### Examples of unsuccessful buyout attempts

In October of 2023, the editor of the Spanish journal *Psicológica* reported being approached by an undisclosed, Singapore-based entity interested in purchasing the journal he edits. Although this editor had no intention of selling, he decided to interact with the company representative and has since publicly shared details of his conversation with its CEO (Perakakis, 2023). The main function of this organization was to facilitate the acquisition of journals on behalf of other publishers. During their discussion, the company representative disclosed their ambition was “to acquire around 100 journals and then sell them to a large commercial publisher”. The CEO is also quoted as stating, “We are now building our empire.” The best offer this editor received for the journal was US\$300,000. Other editors of Spanish journals have also reported receiving buyout offers from similar companies, with initial figures ranging between US\$250,000 and US\$350,000 (Figure 1).

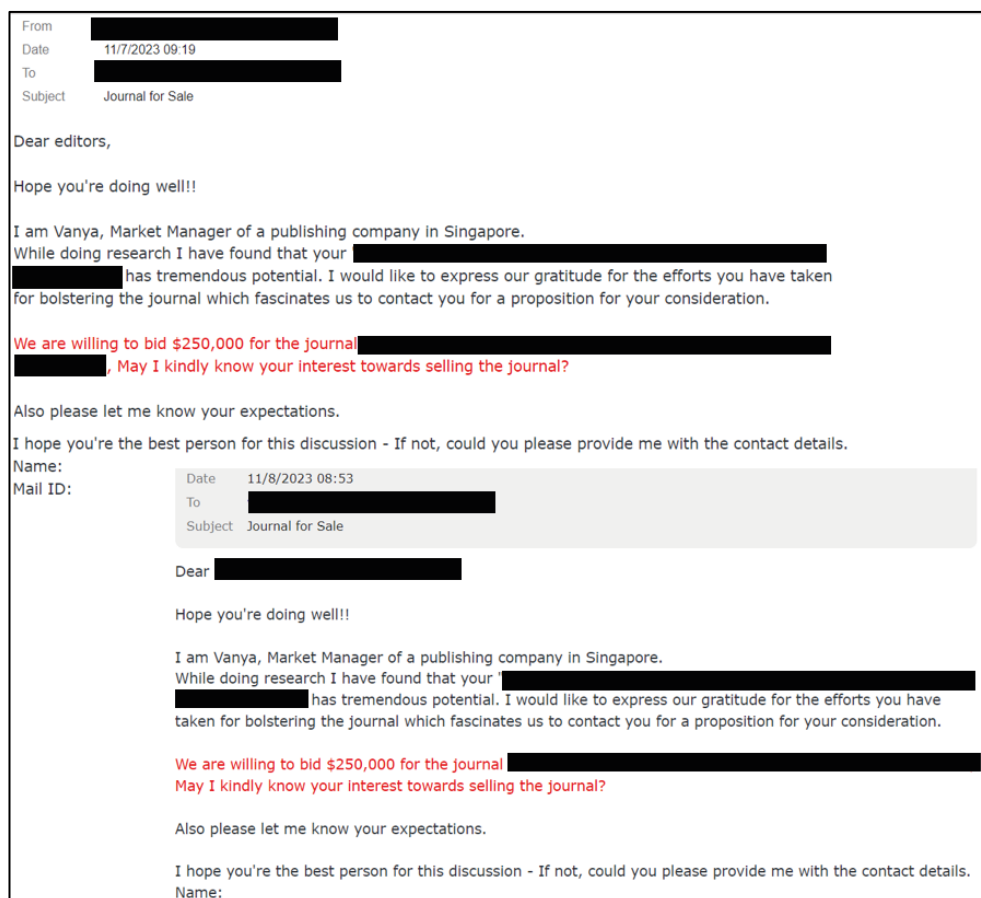


Figure 1. Examples of e-mails sent to editors of Spanish academic journals. Provided by the journals themselves and reproduced with permission. Source: Delgado-López-Cozar & Martín-Martín (2024)

In November 2023, the blog *For Better Science* reported other examples of journals that are publishing the buyout offers they receive (Smut Clyde, 2023). For instance, the *Macedonian Journal of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering* has, since December of 2021, made public a list of 22 e-mails from publishers inquiring as to its potential buyout, despite their public stance on not selling (Macedonian Journal of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, 2021). Among the companies that signed these e-mails we can find: *Microlearning Co. Ltd.*, *Pulsus Healthtech*, *Open Access Text Limited (OAText)*, *NISTEMR*, *MRE Press*, *Longdom Publishing*, *JCF Corp* (based in Singapore), *Codon Publications*, and *Technoarete Group*. An offer of US\$400,000 can be found among these e-mails. The *International Journal of Pagan Studies* has also reported that they periodically receive these kind of offers (Clifton, 2021). The example e-mail they provide is from *JCF Corp*.

A simple web search using the names and companies that signed these offers yielded a few additional examples. For instance, *OAText* seems to have been

trying to acquire established journals since, at least, January of 2020, as evidenced by their email to the editor of *Issues in Educational Research* (Atkinson, 2020). In this case, the response from the editor was unequivocally negative, declaring that “it is immediately and conclusively apparent that you are conducting a predatory journal operation on a large scale.” *OAText* also e-mailed the editor of *Somatechnics* in February of 2021 (Randell-Moon, 2021). The editor, mentioning that she was receiving multiple similar messages, wondered whether the offer came from a predatory publisher.

### **Examples of successful buyout attempts**

Some of the companies that signed the buyout offers mentioned above do, in fact, have a history of being associated with fraudulent practices. In December of 2015, *Pulsus Group*, a publisher of biomedical journals originally founded in 1984 in Canada, was acquired by *iMedPub*, a subsidiary of *OMICS Group* (Brown, 2016). As such, this is an early case of an established publisher bought out by an entity known to engage in predatory practices. The goal of such an investment, in words of retired librarian Jeffrey Beall (as quoted in Brown, 2016), was “[...] not only buying journals, it is buying metrics and indexing,' such as the journal’s impact factors and listing in Scopus and PubMed, in order to look legitimate”.

The purchase of *Pulsus Group* took place before it became publicly known that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) of the United States of America had charged *OMICS Group*, as well as its subsidiaries (including *iMedPub*) for “deceiving academics and researchers about the nature of its publications and hiding publication fees ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars” (Federal Trade Commission, 2016). In 2019, a federal court ruled in favour of the FTC, ordering *OMICS Group* to stop misrepresenting the services they offer, and setting a judgement against them of US\$50.1 million (Federal Trade Commission, 2019).

Other companies that have acquired established journals in recent years, such as *OAText*, were already included in Beall’s list of *Potential, possible, or probable predatory scholarly open-access publishers* since as early as October 2014 (Beall, 2014). Similarly to *OMICS Group* at that time, *OAText*’s primary business strategy in 2015 was apparently to invite researchers via e-mail to submit manuscripts to its journals, advertising a “rapid review process and publication facility [sic] which allows submission to be published in just over 7-10 days” (Beall, 2015).

While numerous journals have proven impervious to buyout propositions, either due to lack of interest or scepticism towards the offers, there have been instances where sales have been finalized. Below, we describe a few cases in which buyout offers were successful. Given the limited availability of information on journal

buyout transactions, this list is not exhaustive either, and therefore only comprises cases for which we have been able to find public evidence.

On 2021, the blog *Tobacco Control* reported the buyout of the journal *Tobacco Regulatory Science* (Baker, 2021). According to Baker, the Editor-in-Chief at the time, Scott Leischow, informed the editorial team of the purchase in 2019. He was succeeded in 2020 by the executive director and new owner of the journal, Elbert Glover. In 2021, *Tobacco Regulatory Science* was sold again, this time to *JCF Corp*. According to Baker, an internal memo implies that the journal was subsequently acquired by a Malaysian company called *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*, although she notes that “there is a lack of clarity in the JCF Corp memo as to who now owns the journal”.

Baker reports that the journal exhibited unusual behaviour after its acquisition, such as an unprecedented increase in the volume of articles processed, accompanied by an increase of the APC. Specifically, after acquisition, the journal processed in two months an amount of articles equivalent to what it had previously handled over a span of 2-3 years. Furthermore, many of the manuscripts were not tobacco related.

*Tobacco Regulatory Science* was indexed by Web of Science and Scopus up until volume 7, issue 4 (2021). This journal is marked as editorially de-listed in the Web of Science Core Collection changes archive for 2023 (Clarivate Analytics, n.d.-a), which means that the journal “has been re-evaluated and does not meet one or more of the quality criteria, resulting in removal from Web of Science Core Collection”. Nevertheless, the website of the journal still claims to be “currently indexed” in this source (Tobacco Regulatory Science, n.d.). The last issue available in the journal’s website is volume 10, issue 1 (2024). This suggests that the journal might have stopped publishing issues shortly after its coverage was discontinued from Web of Science and Scopus. In January 2025, the journal’s web domain (tobreg.org) ceased to display any information related to the journal and instead began hosting content about gambling services.

Around the same time that *Tobacco Regulatory Science* was first acquired by Elbert Glover, he was also the Editor-in-Chief of the *American Journal of Health Behavior* (American Journal of Health Behavior, 2019). Similarly to *Tobacco Regulatory Science*, this journal was eventually sold to *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*. According to The New York Times, in 2021 the *American Journal of Health Behavior* was reportedly paid US\$51,000 by Juul Labs, an e-cigarette company, to publish “11 studies funded by the company offering evidence that Juul products help smokers quit” (Kaplan, 2021).

The blog *For Better Science* has documented numerous cases of journals being acquired by some of the aforementioned entities (Smut Clyde, 2023). For example, *Pal Arch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology* (PJAEE),

along with two other sister journals published by the *PalArch Foundation* originally based in the Netherlands, were acquired by *OAText* (PalArch Foundation, 2020). The journal *Review of International Geographical Education Online* (RIGEO) also changed ownership in recent years. However, the invoices sent to authors publishing in both these journals (some of which are publicly available in academic repositories<sup>1,2</sup>) now identify *Intellectual Edge Consultancy* as the beneficiary of the publication fee.

Another recently sold journal, *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica*, now has a new editor, Professor Dr. Kittisak Jermsittiparsert, who is also listed as editor of the two other aforementioned journals. Professor Dr. Jermsittiparsert has had one article retracted and one expression of concern in an Elsevier and Springer journals, respectively. Both are related to irregularities with authorship changes (Haseeb et al., 2022; Lekvan et al., 2024).

Among other journals mentioned by science sleuth Smut Clyde—pseudonym of retired psychologist David Bimler (Else, 2022)—we find the *European Journal of Philosophy of Religion* (acquired by *JCF Corporation*) and *Revista de Psicología del Deporte*, which is sending invoices to authors in which a company called *Oxbridge Publishing House* appears as beneficiary<sup>3</sup>.

The journal *Kurdish Studies*, published since 2013 by a small UK based publisher called *Transnational Press*, was sold in 2022 to a new owner without informing the editorial team. Upon learning this, and despite assurances from the previous publisher that “there would be no attempts to interfere with the editorial process”, the entire editorial team resigned from the journal, considering the situation a “hostile takeover”, and warning in a public statement that articles after volume 10, issue 2, “have not been peer-reviewed, in spite of claims to that effect” (Schäfers, 2023). Shortly after, the original editorial team founded a new journal, *Kurdish Studies Journal*. In an editorial published in the new journal, which is published by *Brill*, they declare that the new owner operated under various names, “changing from Intellectual Edge Research Publishing to Oxbridge Publishing and most recently Society of History and Cultural Studies” (Table 1). They also declare that the journal “now features new content of very low quality and is obviously run by people devoid of relevant expertise” (van Bruinessen et al., 2023).







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<sup>1</sup> [https://eprints.unram.ac.id/28080/2/Korespondensi%20Dr.%20Nuriadi\\_C2.pdf](https://eprints.unram.ac.id/28080/2/Korespondensi%20Dr.%20Nuriadi_C2.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://repositori.iain-bone.ac.id/779/1/Bukti%20Korespondensi%20Jurnal%20Redesign.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://repository.unizar.ac.id/id/eprint/411/1/Bukti%20Korespondensi-Do%20Social%20Factors%20Contribute%20to%20International%20Sports%20Performance.pdf>

Table 1. Changes in publisher declaration in website of journal Kurdish Studies.

Date	URL	Screenshot
30/11/2022		 <p>Kurdish Studies is a trade mark of Transnational Press London Ltd., Company registered in England and Wales No. 8771684.</p>
08/02/2023		 <p>Kurdish Studies is a trade mark of Oxbridge Publishing House Ltd., Company registered in England and Wales No. 14354859.</p> <p>OLD Publisher: Transnational Press London Ltd</p>
06/05/2023		 <p>Kurdish Studies is a trade mark of Society of history and cultural studies, Hong Kong. OLD Publisher: Transnational Press London Ltd</p>

Cabezas-Clavijo et al. (2023), also noticing this trend, report on four cases of Spanish journals that in the last few years have been acquired by little known publishing entities: the journals *ArtsEduca*, *Revista de Psicología del Deporte* (Journal of Sport Psychology), *Cuadernos de Economía* (Spanish Journal of Economics and Finance), and *Human Review*. They find connections between *Revista de Psicología del Deporte* and *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*, and identify *Oxbridge Publishing House* as the current publisher of *Cuadernos de Economía*. Additionally, they provide examples that illustrate how these journals have significantly changed their behaviour since their acquisition, in terms of researcher community, topics studied, and publication fees.

After the buyout of *ArtsEduca*, a privately owned journal that had nevertheless received support from Universitat Jaume I in Spain, the university amended its internal governance rules for scholarly journals. It prohibited the transfer or sale of journals published under its auspices and established that all journals associated with the university will operate under the diamond open access model (Universitat Jaume I de Castelló, 2024).

In the 2023 edition of Clarivate Analytics' Journal Citation Reports, released on June of 2024, one of the aforementioned journals, *Cuadernos de Economía*, was suppressed for engaging in anomalous citation patterns, namely, citation stacking (Clarivate Analytics, n.d.-b). In October of 2024, this journal was subsequently editorially de-listed from the Web of Science Core Collection. Shortly after, *Revista de Psicología del Deporte* was marked as "on hold" by Web of Science on

its Master Journal List, due to “[c]oncerns [...] about the quality of the content published in this journal” (Figure 2). By January of 2025, this journal had been editorially de-listed from the Web of Science Core Collection as well.

**REVISTA DE PSICOLOGIA DEL DEPORTE** [Share This Journal](#)

ISSN / eISSN 1132-239X / 1988-5636  
Publisher UNIV ILLES BALEARS, SERVEI PUBLICACIONS INTERCANVI CIENTIFIC CAS JAI, CAMPUS UNIV, CARRETERA VALLEMOSSA, K M 7 5, PALMA, SPAIN, ILLES BALEARS, 07122

**On Hold**

Concerns have been raised about the quality of the content published in this journal. The journal is being re-evaluated according to our selection criteria; new content will not be indexed during the course of the re-evaluation.

If the journal meets the quality criteria, any missing content will be indexed. If the journal is removed from coverage, content will not be backfilled. In the most serious cases of breaches in a journal's editorial standards, as determined by our selection criteria, published content may be removed from Web of Science. Timeframes for completing a re-evaluation will depend on the particular circumstances of each case.

When the evaluation is complete, the publisher will be informed of the outcome and the journal will either:

- be removed from coverage if it no longer meets the quality criteria
- or remain covered if it continues to meet the quality criteria.

Figure 2. Screenshot from the journal profile of *Revista de Psicología del Deporte* in Clarivate's Master Journal List. December 12th, 2024.

In 2023, three additional Spanish journals were acquired either by the previously mentioned entities or by other, as yet unidentified, publishers. All three belong to the field of communication studies. The first two are *Comunicar* and *Profesional de la Información* (Delgado-López-Cozar & Martín-Martín, 2024), while the third is *Fonseca, Journal of Communication*.

*Comunicar*, a journal specializing in communication and education studies, was acquired by Oxbridge Publishing House in 2023, as announced on its website (Revista Comunicar, 2023). This journal has been highly regarded in its field over the past decade, particularly since 2018, when it began ranking in the top decile of journals by Journal Impact Factor in Clarivate Analytics' annual Journal Citation Reports. However, in November of 2024, it was editorially de-listed from the Web of Science Core Collection.

That same month that it was de-listed, professors Elias Said-Hung, Roberto Moreno-López, and Fabienne Baider—who were guest editors for an upcoming issue of the journal—published an open letter denouncing their inability to contact *Comunicar*'s new editorial team throughout the year. They also revealed that they were not involved in the content slated for publication in Issue 80. In the letter, they requested to be removed as guest editors of the issue (Said-Hung et al., 2024).

Between January 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, *Comunicar*'s website was replaced by a “Coming soon” message. After the website came back up on the afternoon of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, we identified several significant changes in an exploratory analysis: the page for Issue 79 became blank, and did not show any of the articles previously published in that issue; Issues 77 and earlier stopped displaying DOIs for their



articles; and two associate editors were removed from the editors' page. Most notably, article PDFs were inaccessible in every instance, and, to the best of our knowledge, all article DOIs from the journal—except those in issue 78—redirected to the journal's home page. This means that all content published by *Comunicar* is not only currently severed from the DOI system but also lost to readers and researchers who rely on the journal's website.

*Profesional de la Información* publishes content on communication studies, and to a lesser extent, library and information science studies. The buyout of this journal was first announced in October 2023, in a message from its Editor-in-Chief sent to a private mailing list for members of the editorial board (T. Baiget, personal communication, October 26, 2023)<sup>4</sup>. The message informed the members that the journal had been acquired by “a new division of the English publisher OAText”<sup>5</sup>, and that the takeover was scheduled for January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. However, on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, within the announcements of two call for papers for upcoming issues of *Profesional de la Información* publicized by the former publisher of the journal, it was declared that the new publisher, from January 2024, would be Oxbridge Publishing House (Ediciones Profesionales de la Información, 2024a, 2024b).

Although for some months the journal website itself did not clarify ownership of the journal, by June 18<sup>th</sup> 2024 the contact page had been updated to reflect that the journal was, indeed, managed by Oxbridge Publishing House (Profesional de la Información, n.d.-a). In November of 2024, the mention of this publisher disappeared once again from the contact page (Profesional de la Información, n.d.-b) (Table 2). This was the only page of the journal website that clarified the ownership of the journal, as far as we could determine. On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, we received a new issue alert from the journal, in which the sender, “Khalid M”, appears to be associated with Open Access Text, according to his e-mail address (Figure 3).

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<sup>4</sup> This e-mail was received by Emilio Delgado López-Cózar, who had served as member of the editorial board in this journal from 01/01/2001 until his resignation on 23/12/2022, but was still included in the private mailing list.

<sup>5</sup> Translated from Spanish.

Table 2. Change in publisher declaration in contact page of journal Profesional de la Información, between June and November of 2024.

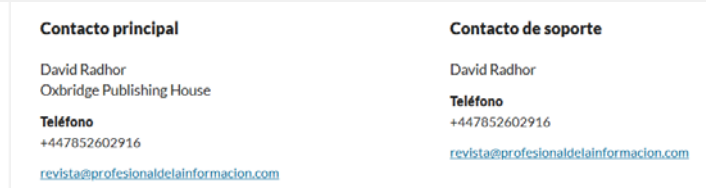



Date	Screenshot	URL
18/06/2024		
26/11/2024		



Figure 3. An individual associated to Open Access Text appears as the sender of a new issue alert in journal Profesional de la Información.

*Fonseca, Journal of Communication* was originally published by Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca (USAL’s university press). Currently, the journal’s website within USAL’s domain states that “Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca published the journal *Fonseca, Journal of Communication*” up until issue 26 (2023) (Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, n.d.-b). Additionally, the announcements page of the journal includes a message from February 2nd, 2024, stating that “[t]he websites revistas-usal.com and revistas-fonseca.com do not belong to the University of Salamanca and have no affiliation with its publishing house” (Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, n.d.-a).

The domain *revistas-usal.com* appears to be active but currently lacks content, while *revistas-fonseca.com* seems to be the journal's current web domain. The homepage of this site declares that "the journal has migrated to a new home [...] offering better functionalities and a more personalised experience," and it confirms that, starting with volume 27, issue 2, "all submissions, updates, and information about the journal will be exclusively hosted on this website" (*[Homepage of Fonseca, Journal of Communication]*, n.d.). An alternative Spanish version of the homepage claims that the journal's website was hosted on USAL's portal up to issue 26 "by categorical imperative", while sections of the journal display text in broken Spanish (e.g., "llamar por papeles" for "call for papers").

Issue 28.1 (2024) of *Fonseca, Journal of Communication*, hosted in the new journal website, includes an editorial by Begoña Gutiérrez San Miguel, director and editor of the journal since it was founded in 2010 (Gutiérrez-San-Miguel, 2024). In this editorial, she announces she is stepping from those positions and declares to be "passing it [the journal] on to a new editorial team". Gutiérrez-San-Miguel stresses that editorial work "should be a matter of professional recognition, supported by institutional acknowledgement for the work performed and supported by the benefits it brings to the university community", and that "institutional support is often merely supportive, and sometimes even indifferent, lacking the sustenance needed to progress because, indeed, it entails a lot of work".

*Fonseca, Journal of Communication* has continued publishing issues: the last one is No. 29.1 (2025), published in in September of 2024 according to the website. However, we could not find a statement, either in the journal's previous or current website, which clarifies the name of the new owner and publisher. The Editorial Team page still lists Begoña Gutiérrez San Miguel as director and editor (*Editorial Team*, n.d.).

### **Acquiring indexed journals to turn them into APC farms: a new predatory practice in scholarly communication?**

The cases described above suggest that a number of questionable publishers, such as *OAText*, *Intellectual Edge Consulting*, *Oxbridge Publishing House*, and others, have now moved from attracting researchers to publish in lesser-known, journal-like constructs that did not measure up to standard editorial practice (Beall, 2015), to acquiring legitimate journals that are indexed in prominent commercial databases such as Web of Science and Scopus, where many researchers already aspire to publish. The existing demand to publish in these journals endows them with significant profit potential (Delgado-López-Cozar & Martín-Martín, 2024).

This potential is driven by two circumstances. Firstly, researchers in many countries face the requirement of publishing in journals indexed by certain databases and featured in associated journal rankings (JCR, CiteScore, SJR) to maintain or advance their academic careers, or to secure research funding. Secondly, a willingness exists among many authors, institutions, and funding bodies to cover Article Processing Charges (APC) for open access publications. Consequently, the acquisition of indexed journals emerges as an attractive investment for entities looking to exploit the APC business model for profit maximization. Such a strategy ensures a steady flow of submissions from researchers as long as journals are not suppressed from these rankings, with the direct correlation that higher APCs and increased publication volumes lead to greater revenues.

The acquisition of journals or publishers by other publishers is not necessarily an irregular or fraudulent act; in fact, it is a well-established phenomenon in the commercial academic publishing industry, which has seen significant consolidation by commercial actors over the last century (Larivière et al., 2015). Additionally, many commercial publishers rely on revenues generated from Article Processing Charges (APCs) as a core aspect of their business model. While the debate surrounding APCs is intense, with some organizations advocating for a shift away from them due to various concerns (BOAI20 Steering Group, 2022; cOAlition S, 2023; European University Association, 2022), the mere use of APCs cannot be deemed as fraudulent, given how much of scholarly communication infrastructure is currently being serviced by commercial entities.

However, the widespread adoption of the APC model to cover publication costs may have attracted actors willing to neglect proper publishing practices in a quest for economic profit. Indeed, there is mounting circumstantial evidence suggesting that journals acquired by some of the recently created entities mentioned above may already be involved in irregular publishing practices. Consequently, there is an urgent need for further analysis to fully understand and address this issue.

## Objectives

In this report, we will examine the history and conduct of one of the recently established publishers, *Oxbridge Publishing House*, which has been acquiring a notable number of journals globally in the last few years. Our focus will be on scrutinizing the behaviour of both *Oxbridge Publishing House* itself and the journals it has acquired. The objective is to determine if the allegations of atypical and potentially irregular practices associated with these entities are substantiated by the available data. Moreover, we seek to evaluate whether these

behaviours are counterproductive to the principles governing proper journal management.

In particular, we will seek to answer the following questions:

1. What is *Oxbridge Publishing House*, and how is it connected to other entities involved in the recent acquisition of academic journals?
2. Which journals have *Oxbridge Publishing House* and other related entities acquired so far?
3. How has the behaviour of these journals changed since their acquisition?
  - a. Changes in publication fees.
  - b. Changes in publication processes.
  - c. Changes in editorial teams (editors and editorial board).
  - d. Changes in volume of publication.
  - e. Changes in author affiliations.
  - f. Changes in topics of publications.

## Materials and methods

In this analysis, we gathered information from two main types of sources. First, we relied on documentary evidence about the companies that have acquired journals to compile the final list of journals included in our study. The sources consulted for this purpose were:

- Publisher websites: We examined both the current live versions and archived versions available through the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine.
- United Kingdom's Companies House service: A registry of companies incorporated in the UK.
- Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia (Companies Commission of Malaysia): A registry of companies incorporated in Malaysia.

After identifying the journals, we collected information about them from various bibliographic data sources at both the journal and document levels:

- Journal-level data sources
  - ISSN Portal: This platform provides information on journals registered with an ISSN. We used it to identify the current publisher of each journal.

- Ulrichsweb: A global serials directory used to further verify the current publisher of the journals.
- Document-level data sources
  - Crossref: We created local instances of Crossref’s public data files from 2017 to 2024 and queried them using the journals’ ISSNs (print and online, when available). Additionally, we queried Crossref’s live API in January 2025 to obtain the most up-to-date metadata for the journals.
  - Web of Science Core Collection: We identified which journals in our analysis are, or have been, indexed in this data source and retrieved all available metadata. Our institution’s subscription includes all indexes and metadata collections available in the Web of Science Core Collection.
  - Scopus: Similarly, we identified journals indexed in Scopus and retrieved all related metadata.

For both Web of Science and Scopus, we collected data at three points in time: March 5, 2024; June 30, 2024; and January 17, 2025. This staggered approach was necessary as additional journals were identified throughout the investigation. Consequently, the datasets from March and June 2024 do not include the full list of journals identified by January 2025.

The specific processing steps applied to each dataset are detailed alongside the analysis.

## Analysis

### **An analysis of *Oxbridge Publishing House* and other related publishing entities, based on documentary evidence**

#### **Connection of *Oxbridge Publishing House* to the University of Oxford and/or the University of Cambridge**

The word Oxbridge is a *portmanteau*, a type of word formed by combining the beginning of one word and the end of another. In this case, the two original words are Oxford and Cambridge. This term is commonly used to refer to the collective identity of the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, often conveying a sense of prestige, academic excellence, and elitism (“Oxbridge,” 2024).

By adopting the name *Oxbridge Publishing House*, the entity appears to be strategically appropriating the prestige and excellence associated with the

University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. This choice could perhaps be aimed at projecting an image of scholarly seriousness and credibility, thereby facilitating its commercial objectives in the academic publishing market<sup>6</sup>. Indeed, in its website the publisher presents itself as a “renowned and prestigious publishing company” (Oxbridge Publishing House, n.d.-b).

The issue of how a publisher is named is sufficiently relevant that the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), in its *Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing*, declares that “Organisational names should not be used in a way that could mislead potential authors and editors about the nature of the journal’s owner” (Committee on Publication Ethics, 2019). *Oxbridge Publishing House* declares that it “adhere[s] to the ethical guidelines established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)” (Oxbridge Publishing House, n.d.-d). However, in using the name *Oxbridge Publishing House*, this entity seems to be doing exactly what COPE recommends should not be done.

The company’s association with the United Kingdom also seems to be frequently emphasized when the entity is mentioned. For instance, the Spanish version of the Wikipedia entry for the journal *Comunicar* was updated on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to include the statement “Currently, since 2023, it [the journal] belongs editorially to the English company Oxbridge Publishing House”<sup>7</sup> (“Comunicar (revista),” 2024). Similarly, the calls for papers for upcoming issues of *Profesional de la Información* state: “Since January 2024, Profesional de la Información is published by Oxbridge Publishing House, UK” (Ediciones Profesionales de la Información, 2024a, 2024b). Lastly, for a short time, the journal’s website announced the following: “From January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, this journal 'Profesional de la Información' is published by the English publisher Oxbridge Publishing House”<sup>8</sup>. Repeated references to England or the United Kingdom as the headquarters of *Oxbridge Publishing House* (true as they may be), coupled with the use of the “Oxbridge” portmanteau, could induce a positive country-of-origin bias by

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<sup>6</sup> If this is indeed the strategy, Oxbridge Publishing House Ltd. could be taking a page out of Elsevier's book, since the Dutch publisher is infamously at the centre of the most renowned instance of an academic publisher skilfully appropriating unearned prestige to solidify its brand’s name. Founded in 1880, Elsevier took its name from the House of Elzevir, esteemed Dutch publishers of the 16th and 17th centuries known for their outstanding scholarly publications. Moreover, Elsevier’s logo unmistakably draws inspiration from the Elzevir family’s printer’s mark, further asserting a connection to a legacy of scholarly excellence to which they had no historical claim.

<sup>7</sup> Translated from Spanish.

<sup>8</sup> Translated from Spanish. This mentioned has now disappeared from the website.

appealing to United Kingdom's widely renowned tradition of scientific research, ultimately encouraging the acceptance of the new publisher among authors who may have concerns about its credentials.

To determine whether the entity has ties to the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge, and to gain a general overview of the history of the company, we explored the information available about the company and the people behind it.

The web domain of *Oxbridge Publishing House* is *oxbridgepublishinghouse.com*. The first snapshot of this domain available in the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine dates to March of 2023 (Oxbridge Publishing House, n.d.-c) (Table 3). As far as we could determine, this website does not declare any connection to the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.



Table 3. Home page of publisher Oxbridge Publishing House on March 23rd, 2023.

URL	Screenshot

We examined the company’s records in the official registry maintained by the UK’s *Companies House*, an executive agency of the British Government. According to the *Get company information* service offered by *Companies House* (Companies House, n.d.-d), the entity is indeed registered in the United Kingdom, having been incorporated on September 13, 2022. This, however, contradicts the publisher’s website claim of being operational “since 2004” (Oxbridge Publishing House, n.d.-b). Its registered office address is listed as 62 St. Bernards Road, Solihull, England. The company had previously been located at 4 White House Way in the same town. Solihull, a market town in the West Midlands, is situated just over 10 kilometres from the centre of Birmingham city.

The registry identifies a sole individual linked to the company: Muhammad Haseeb, who acts as its director (Companies House, n.d.-d). The publisher’s website also names him as the only member of the publisher’s advisory board (Oxbridge Publishing House, n.d.-a). On this page, his stated affiliation is “Visiting Professor at the University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw, Poland”. An ORCID profile corresponding to the same name and affiliation (Haseeb, n.d.) reveals that Muhammad Haseeb holds a PhD in Environmental Economics from Universiti Utara Malaysia and has associations with institutions across various countries, including Poland, Malaysia, and Pakistan.

#### **Connections between *Oxbridge Publishing House* and other entities**

Neither the *Companies House* service nor the publisher website yielded evidence of any ties between *Oxbridge Publishing House Ltd.* and the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge. Nevertheless, these sources revealed further pertinent details to this case: for instance, 62 St. Bernards Road serves as the address for not just one, but four academic publishing companies, all of them active at the time of writing this piece (Figure 4). Three of them have set their “nature of business” as “publishing of learned journals”. *H&N Publishers UK Limited* only lists “educational support services”.

**Advanced company search**

Fill in one or more fields to search the Companies House register.

Update results Clear search

Open all

4 results Download results

Results are downloaded as a CSV file. Only the first 5,000 results can be downloaded.

Company name +

Registered office address -

Enter a full or partial address

62 St. Bernards Road, Solihull, England

Incorporation date +

Company status +

Nature of business +

Company type +

Company subtype +

Dissolved date +

Update results Clear search

**H&N PUBLISHERS UK LIMITED**  
Active  
Private limited company  
14357473 - Incorporated on 15 September 2022  
62 St Bernards Road, Solihull, England B92 7BA  
SIC codes - 85600

**PNG PUBLICATIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LIMITED**  
Active  
Private limited company  
15139369 - Incorporated on 14 September 2023  
62 St. Bernards Road, Solihull, England B92 7BA  
SIC codes - 58141, 58142, 58190

**OXBRIDGE PUBLISHING HOUSE LTD**  
Active  
Private limited company  
14354859 - Incorporated on 13 September 2022  
62 St. Bernards Road, Solihull, England B92 7BA  
SIC codes - 58110, 58141, 58142, 58190

**THINKBIOTECH LIMITED**  
Active  
Private limited company  
14354870 - Incorporated on 13 September 2022  
62 St Bernards Road, Solihull, England B92 7BA  
SIC codes - 58141, 58142, 58190

4 results Download results

Results are downloaded as a CSV file. Only the first 5,000 results can be downloaded.

Figure 4. Companies registered on 62 St. Bernards Road, Solihull, England, according to the *Companies House* service. Consulted on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 2024.

The company *H&N Publishers UK Limited* was incorporated on 15 September 2022, and lists two different people involved (Companies House, n.d.-a). They are Muhammad Haseeb (also the director of *Oxbridge Publishing House Ltd.*) and Nira Hariyatie Hartani, who serves as director and secretary. Hartani has already been identified as a recurrent presence in editorial teams of journals after they are acquired. Cabezas-Clavijo et al. (2023) identified Dr. Hartani as editor in *ArtsEduca* and *Cuadernos de Economía*, while Smut Clyde (2023) identified Dr. Hartani in the role of editor in *Revista de Psicología del Deporte* and the Polish journal *Przestrzeń Społeczna* (Social Space Journal). In editorial board pages, Dr. Hartani often declares the affiliation “Independent Researcher & Director CV. Intellectual Edge Consultancy” (see for example, *Revista de Psicología del Deporte*, 2024). The web domain of this publisher used to be *hnpublisher.co.uk*. The earliest capture of this domain available in Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine dates from March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Table 4). However, that website is currently unavailable, and instead the message “Sorry, you have been blocked” is displayed.

Table 4. Home page of publisher H&N Publishing House, on March 4th, 2024.

URL	Screenshot
	<p>Since 2022, Fostering Research, Widening Reach. <a href="mailto:info@hnpublisher.co.uk">info@hnpublisher.co.uk</a></p> <p><b>H &amp; N Publishing House</b> Home About Advisory Board Journals Open Access Contact</p> <p><b>H&amp;N; PUBLISHERS as a leading platform for academic publications</b>  <b>Committed to Fostering Scientific Publications</b>      Exceptional leadership, guiding the publishing house towards excellence and promoting a culture of innovation.  <a href="#">About Us</a></p> <p><b>International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences</b>      e-ISSN : 0973-5089  <a href="#">View Journal</a> <a href="#">Current Issue</a> <a href="#">Submissions</a></p> <p><b>International Journal of Instructional Cases</b>      ISSN : 2399-830X  <a href="#">View Journal</a> <a href="#">Current Issue</a> <a href="#">Submissions</a></p> <p><b>International Journal of Cyber Criminology</b>      E-ISSN : 0974 – 2891  <a href="#">View Journal</a> <a href="#">Current Issue</a> <a href="#">Submissions</a></p> <p><b>Artseduca</b>      ISSN : 2254-0709  <a href="#">View Journal</a> <a href="#">Current Issue</a> <a href="#">Submissions</a></p> <p><b>Open Access</b>      Open Access (OA) is a publishing model that provides free, immediate, and unrestricted access to scholarly research outputs, including journal articles, conference papers, thesis, dissertations, and more      ✓ Free Access      ✓ Copyright Retention      ✓ Creative Commons Licenses      ✓ Repositories and Archives  <a href="#">Learn More</a></p> <p><b>About Journal</b>      The Publisher Section at H-n Publishers plays a pivotal role in the effective management and strategic development of our open-access scholarly journals. Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of our four distinguished journals, including the International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences, International Journal of Instructional Cases, Artseduca, and International Journal of Cyber Criminology, this section ensures the seamless functioning of our publishing endeavors.  <a href="#">Learn More</a></p> <p><b>Contact Us</b>  <a href="mailto:info@hnpublisher.co.uk">info@hnpublisher.co.uk</a></p> <p><b>H &amp; N Publishing House</b> Home About Advisory Board Open Access Contact Us <a href="mailto:info@hnpublisher.co.uk">info@hnpublisher.co.uk</a></p>

As far as we can determine, *Intellectual Edge Consultancy* is a company registered in Malaysia, according to the *Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia* (Companies Commission of Malaysia). This can be verified in its portal (Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia, n.d.), although, unlike with the British *Companies Service*, more detailed information is not freely available (Figure 4). The company used to have a website in the domain *intelledualedgeconsultancy.com*, and claimed to publish four journals (Intellectual Edge Consultancy, n.d.-c) (Table 5).


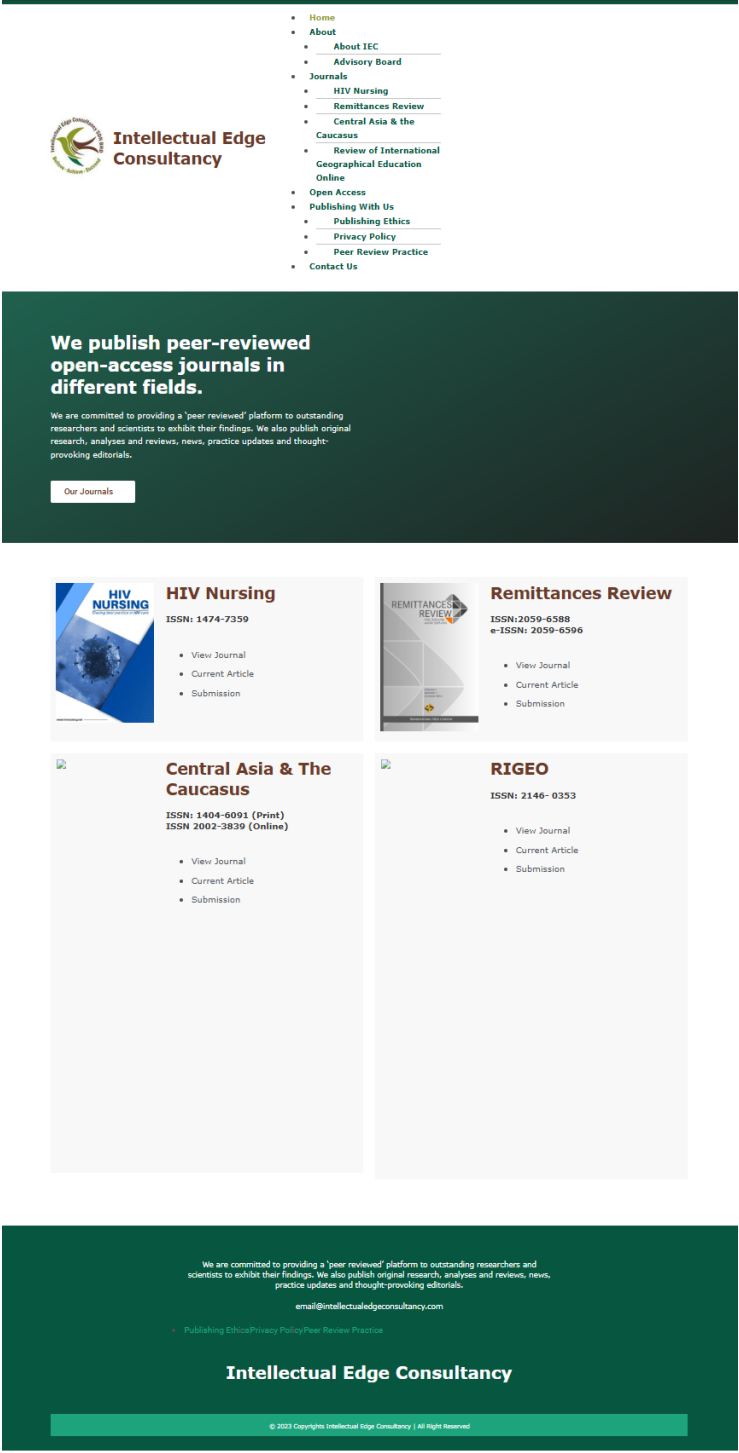
The screenshot shows the 'e-Search' interface. At the top, there is a 'Registration Type' dropdown menu set to 'Company Registration Number Old'. Below it is a 'Registration Number' input field containing '1311127', with an example 'EXAMPLE: 123456' below. A reCAPTCHA 'I'm not a robot' checkbox is present, along with a 'Search Now' button. A yellow warning banner states: 'ATTENTION! SSM shall not be held liable and responsible for any misuse of the information by irresponsible person.' Below this is a table with the following data:

Registration Number	New Registration Number	Entity Type	Status	GST Number
1311127-A	201901001801	INTELLECTUAL EDGE SDN. BHD.	EXISTING	

Below the table, it says 'As at: 30/03/2024' and 'GST No. as at: 31/01/2016'. There are also links for purchasing comprehensive company and business information.





Figure 5. Information available for free about *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*, available in the portal of Companies Commission of Malaysia.

Table 5. Home page of publisher Intellectual Edge Consultancy, on March 22nd, 2023.

URL	Screenshot
	

The “About us” page in this website stated that “Intellectual Edge Consultancy was formerly trading as ‘The London Publishers’ and ‘Migration Letters’ since 2003” (Intellectual Edge Consultancy, n.d.-a). This is confusing, because the same statement can also be found in the website of publisher *Transnational Press London* (Transnational Press London, n.d.-a) (Table 6). This is not the only similarity between the websites of publishers in the *Oxbridge/Intellectual Edge* network, and the website of *Transnational Press London*, as seen in Table 10. Furthermore, the nine people listed in the advisory board of *Intellectual Edge Consultancy* in 2023 according to its website (Intellectual Edge Consultancy, n.d.-b), are also present in *Transnational Press London’s* advisory board on March 2024, in the same order of appearance (Transnational Press London, n.d.-b). Transnational Press London Ltd. is a scholarly publishing company based in the UK since 2013, and as previously mentioned, the original publisher of the journal *Kurdish Studies*, among other journals and books.

Table 6. Similarities in “About” page of Intellectual Edge Consultancy and Transnational Press.

“About” page of Intellectual Edge Consultancy on 22/03/2023	“About” page of Transnational Press on 05/03/2024
	
<p><b>IEC / About IEC</b></p> <p><b>About Us</b></p> <p>Intellectual Edge Consultancy (IEC) is an independent international publisher of academic and professional journals, periodicals, magazines, books and catalogues. Currently the journal portfolio offers several periodicals including :</p> <p>HIV Nursing Remittances Review Central Asia &amp; The Caucasus RIGEO</p> <p><b>About IEC</b></p> <p>Intellectual Edge Consultancy, as an international publisher of academic and professional journals, periodicals, magazines, books and catalogs, offers a series of books along with some leading journals. The books published by Transnational Press London are written by experts in their respective fields and reviewed by peers including our own advisory board members and reviewers. Published books and journals are made available through key libraries such as British Library, Oxford University Bodleian Library, and Cambridge University Library, as well as being available through international book distributors including Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Lulu, Ingram and Nielsen. Please use the menu for books and journals to find more about our journals, books and book series as well as conferences and events.</p> <p>Editorial address for sending book proposals: <a href="mailto:admin@intellectualedgeconsultancy.com">admin@intellectualedgeconsultancy.com</a></p> <p>Intellectual Edge Consultancy was formerly trading as “The London Publishers” and “Migration Letters” since 2003.</p>	<p>About Transnational Press London</p> <p>Transnational Press London (TPLondon) is an independent international publisher of academic and professional journals, periodicals, magazines, books and catalogues. Currently the journal portfolio offers several periodicals including <a href="#">Migration and Diversity</a>, <a href="#">Transnational Business and Management</a>, <a href="#">The Commentaries</a>, <a href="#">AVAR</a>, <a href="#">the Agonist</a>, <a href="#">Göç Dergisi</a>, <a href="#">Border Crossing</a>, <a href="#">Journal of Posthumanism</a>, <a href="#">Journal of Ecohumanism</a>, and <a href="#">Discrimination</a>.</p> <p><b>TRANSNATIONAL PRESS® LONDON</b></p> <p>Some of the titles published by TPLondon includes <a href="#">Pricing the New Frontiers</a>, <a href="#">Entrepreneurial Transitions in Family Business</a>, <a href="#">Organic Model</a>, <a href="#">Governance and Succession</a>, <a href="#">A Defining Moment – Transnational Nursing Education</a>, <a href="#">International Operations</a>, <a href="#">Innovation and Sustainability</a>, <a href="#">Revisiting Gender and Migration</a>, <a href="#">Women from North Move South</a>, <a href="#">Overeducated and Over Here</a>, <a href="#">Image of Istanbul</a>, <a href="#">Impact of ECOC 2010 on the City Image</a>, <a href="#">Family and Human Capital in Turkish Migration</a>, <a href="#">Turkish Migration, Identity and Integration and Conflict</a>, <a href="#">Insecurity and Mobility</a>.</p> <p><b>Please browse our catalogue for books and journals to find more about our journals, books and book series as well as conferences and events.</b></p> <p><b>About Transnational Press London</b></p> <p>Transnational Press London (TPLondon) is an international publisher of academic and professional journals, periodicals, magazines, books and catalogs, offers a series of books along with some leading journals. The books published by Transnational Press London are written by experts in their respective fields and reviewed by peers including our own advisory board members and reviewers. Published books and journals are made available through key libraries such as British Library, Oxford University Bodleian Library, and Cambridge University Library, as well as being available through international book distributors including Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Lulu, Ingram and Nielsen. Please use the menu for books and journals to find more about our journals, books and book series as well as conferences and events.</p> <p>Editorial address for sending book proposals: <a href="mailto:admin@tplondon.com">admin@tplondon.com</a></p> <p>Transnational Press London was formerly trading as “The London Publishers” and “Migration Letters” since 2003.</p> <p>Share this:</p> <p> Facebook  X</p>

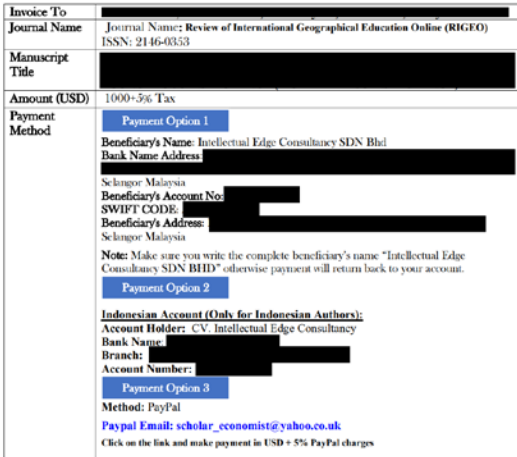





Various pieces of documentary evidence link *Intellectual Edge Consultancy* to *Oxbridge Publishing House*:

1. As documented above, Dr. Hartani, who claims to be director of *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*, and Dr. Haseeb, director of *Oxbridge Publishing House*, serve together as co-directors in a third company, *H&N Publishers UK Limited*.
2. Dr. Hartani, Dr. Haseeb, and Dr. Jermsittiparsert, are all coauthors in a paper published in a Springer journal that received an expression of concern because of “irregularities with authorship changes” (Haseeb et al., 2022).
3. The e-mail address listed in several APC invoices where *Intellectual Edge Consultancy* appears as the beneficiary, is the same e-mail address that both Dr. Haseeb and Dr. Hartani have used on several occasions as part of their contact information when publishing academic content (Table 7).
4. Dr. Hartani serves, or has served, as editor in several journals acquired by *Oxbridge Publishing House* (see for example, *Cuadernos de Economía*, n.d.).
5. In the “Contact us” page available in *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*’s former website, the address displayed was “4 White House Way, B91 1SE Sollihul [sic] United Kingdom”, which is the former address of *Oxbridge Publishing House* and other publishers.
6. The payment information currently displayed in the website of the *American Journal of Health Behavior* declares that payments of Asian authors are managed by “Intellectual edge consultancy Malaysia”, while payments from American, European, and Middle East countries are managed by “Oxbridge Publishing House United Kingdom” (*American Journal of Health Behavior*, n.d.).

This evidence suggests that both entities and the people responsible for them are in fact collaborating in the same publishing operation.

Table 7. Use of the same e-mail address by Dr. Haseeb and Dr. Hartani, which also coincides with the e-mail used by Intellectual Edge Consultancy for APC payments.

Description	Screenshot	URL
<p>Payment information in APC invoice issued by the journal <i>Review of International Geographical Education Online (RIGEO)</i> where <i>Intellectual Edge Consultancy</i> appears as the beneficiary. Under the PayPal payment option, the e-mail <a href="mailto:scholar_economist@yahoo.co.uk">scholar_economist@yahoo.co.uk</a> is listed.</p>		
<p>The same e-mail is used by Dr. Hartani as part of their affiliation and contact information in a published article.</p>	<p>Address for correspondence Dr. Nira Hariyatie Hartani, Department of Economics, UCSI University Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia E-mail: <a href="mailto:scholar_economist@yahoo.co.uk">scholar_economist@yahoo.co.uk</a></p>	
<p>The same e-mail is used by Dr. Haseeb as part of their affiliation and contact information in a published article.</p>	<p><b>Muhammad Haseeb*</b> Faculty of Business Management and Professional Studies (FBMP), Management and Science University (MSU), University Drive, Seksyen 13, 40100, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia Email: <a href="mailto:Scholar_economist@yahoo.co.uk">Scholar_economist@yahoo.co.uk</a> *Corresponding author</p>	

### Payment Gateways

Intellectual edge consultancy Malaysia deals with the Accounts Department of AJHB for Asian Authors.


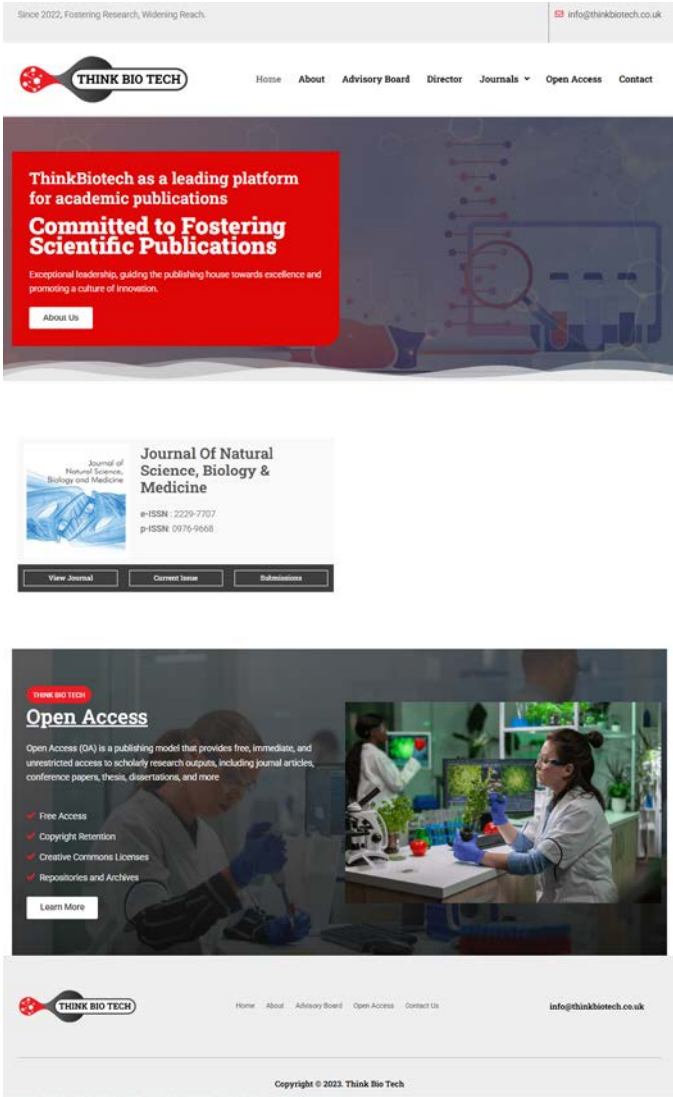

Oxbridge Publishing House United Kingdom has ties with the American journal of health Behavior. For easy transfer of payments of accepted articles of AJHB, Oxbridge Publishing House provides account services to authors from American, European, and Middle East countries.

Figure 6. Excerpt of APC payment information declared by the American Journal of Health Behavior as of 24th of March, 2024.

Another company currently based on 62 St. Bernards Road is *PNG Publications and Scientific Research Limited*. This company was incorporated on 14 September 2023, and its director is Muhammad Talha (Companies House, n.d.-e). However, there was another company with the same name that was incorporated in 22 July 2021 and dissolved on 24 January 2023, which was directed by Dr. Muhammad Haseeb (Companies House, n.d.-f). This company was based on 27 Ashby Close, Farnworth, Bolton, England. *PNG Publications* was also the name of a company based on the United States, and which originally published the *American Journal of Health Behavior* until this journal was acquired by its UK namesake, as can be inferred from the information currently available in the journal's website (American Journal of Health Behavior, n.d.). The name of the company seems to correspond to the initials of the original executive editor of the *American Journal of Health Behavior*, Penny N. Glover.

The last company currently based on 62 St. Bernards Road is *Thinkbiotech Limited*. This company, incorporated on 13 September 2022, is also directed by Muhammad Talha (Companies House, n.d.-h). The current web domain of Thinkbiotech is *thinkbiotech.co.uk* (Table 8) and offers conflicting information on how many journals it publishes: while the Home page only lists one journal, the "Director" page declares that the organization "oversees and manages" eight journals in total. The first capture of this domain in Internet Archive dates from December of 2024. Additionally, the web domain *thinkbiotech.org* used to be active as well, and claimed to publish four journals (a subset of the eight listed in the more recent domain).

Table 8. Home page of publisher Thinkbiotech.

URL	Screenshot
	
	<p>In addition to his remarkable research accomplishments, Amjid Iqbal's leadership at ThinkbioTech is marked by his experience in running multiple specialized journals. Under his guidance, ThinkbioTech oversees and manages an array of prestigious journals, each dedicated to fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among researchers and professionals worldwide. These journals include the Journal Of Natural Science, Biology &amp; Medicine, Journal of Commercial Biotechnology, FishTaxa – Journal of Fish Taxonomy, Jornal Brasileiro de Patologia e Medicina Laboratorial, Vascular and Endovascular Review (VER), The Review of Diabetic Studies, Revista Internacional De Medicina Y Ciencias De La Actividad Fisica Y Del Deporte, and Journal of Carcinogenesis. Under his direction, these journals have become prominent platforms for disseminating cutting-edge research and facilitating multidisciplinary collaboration.</p>

Muhammad Talha is also the director of *Remittances Review Limited*, a company dedicated to “publishing of consumer and business journals and periodicals” based on 4 White House Way, Solihull (the previous address of *Oxbridge Publishing House*), and incorporated on 21 May 2023 (Companies House, n.d.-g). This location is also the base of *Versemark Publishers Ltd.*, incorporated on 5 July 2023, also dedicated to “publishing of learned journals”, and directed by Muhammad Talal Ahmad (Companies House, n.d.-i).

Because of Smut Clyde’s prior investigation (2023) we also know of an additional brand name linked to *Oxbridge Publishing House*, that of *Wisdom Park Publication*. This name does not seem to match any company registered in the UK, but in 2023 there was a website on the domain *wisdomparkpublication.com*, which is currently unavailable, in which this brand claimed to publish the journal *Revista de Psicología del Deporte* (linked to *Oxbridge Publishing House* and *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*), and six other journals (*Wisdom Park Publication*, n.d.-b) (Table 9). The archived *Wisdom Park Publication* website displayed “Lorem ipsum” placeholder text in the section “About Wisdom Park Publication”. Lastly, in its “Contact us” page, the address that is displayed is “Oxbridge Publishing House, 4 White House Way, B91 1SE Sollihul [sic] United Kingdom” (*Wisdom Park Publication*, n.d.-a).

Table 9. Home page of Wisdom Park Publication on July 24th, 2023.

URL	Screenshot

From the aforementioned private announcement of the buyout of the journal *Profesional de la Información*, it is inferred that there could also be a connection between *Oxbridge Publishing House* and *Open Access Text (OAText)*. However, the information we have found suggests that this connection is probably of a different nature than those previously described. *Open Access Text Ltd* is also a company registered in the UK.

The instance of the company that is currently active was incorporated on September 22, 2017. The company is directed by Priyanka Gaddam and is based at Office Gold, Building 3, Chiswick Park, 566 Chiswick High Road, London, England (Companies House, n.d.-c). According to the Companies House service, there are (or have been at some point) up to 529 companies based at this address. A previous iteration of the company, now dissolved, was named *Open Access Text Global Ltd*. It was established on April 17, 2014, with headquarters at the same location, and directed by both Priyanka Gaddam and Ranjith Kumar Donthi (Companies House, n.d.-b).

Apart from the announcement that *Profesional de la Inormacion* had been acquired by *OAText* and its following transfer to *Oxbridge Publishing House*, the only connection between *OAText* and the network of companies that *Oxbridge Publishing House* seems to be a part of, involves the journal *Archives of Clinical Psychiatry*, one of the journals listed in the portfolio of *Wisdom Park Publication*. This journal has an assistant editor, Mr. Robert Rae, that is affiliated to *OAText*, according to information displayed in Scielo (Archives of Clinical Psychiatry, 2022). Additionally, 23 articles published in this journal are associated with the publisher *Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd* in the article metadata available in Crossref (see for example, CrossRef, n.d.), while the remaining records are associated with its original publisher, the Federal University of São Paulo, in Brazil.

Smut Clyde (2023), who found that *Pal Arch's Journal of Archeology of Egypt / Egyptology*, after being sold to *OAText*, had begun to send invoices to authors in which *Intellectual Edge Consultancy* appeared as the beneficiary, suggests that *OAText* could be acting as an intermediary, acquiring journals from their original owners, and then reselling them to other entities.

### **Similarity of content displayed in *Oxbridge Publishing House's* website and other publisher websites**
















We additionally conducted a search of text displayed on the website of *Oxbridge Publishing House* using the general search engine *Google* and found several matches of the text in other websites, as detailed in Table 10. This analysis reveals that a significant portion of the content on this website is identical to content available in other publishers' websites.






For example, the slogan “Since 2024, fostering research, widening reach” appeared on Transnational Press London’s website in 2021, well before Oxbridge Publishing House was even established as a company. A similar slogan, omitting the “Since 2024” portion, was also found on the websites of other publishers, including H&N Publishing House, Wisdom Park Publication, and ThinkBioTech. This reuse of content from another publisher’s website likely explains the discrepancy between the date referenced in the slogan and Oxbridge’s actual founding date.

Additionally, paragraphs or partial sentences displayed on the homepage of *Oxbridge Publishing House* were identified on well-known publishers’ websites like the *Royal Society of Chemistry* and *BioMed Central*. Similar instances were observed on other sections of the website, such as the “Advisory Board” page and the “Open Access” page, where content closely resembled that found on *Transnational Press London*’s website and *Intellectual Edge Consultancy*’s website (Table 10).



Table 10. Matches in text content between Oxbridge Publishing House's website, and other publisher websites

Text	Position in Oxbridge Publishing House website	Matches in other websites
“Since 2004, fostering research, widening reach”	Home 	Transnational Press London 
“Fostering research, widening reach”	Home 	H&N Publishing House  Wisdom Park Publication  ThinkBioTech 
“We are committed to providing a ‘peer reviewed’ platform to outstanding researchers and scientists to exhibit their findings. We also publish original research, analyses and reviews, news, practice updates and thought-provoking editorials.”	Home 	Sobiad.org  Wisdom Park Publication  Intellectual Edge 
“No matter how many times you have done it, it’s an incredible feeling to publish an article. Seeing months, maybe years of hard work finalised, ready to go out into the world and earn recognition, is something to treasure. We do all we can to help you reach that point smoothly. And we will stay with you as you navigate the world as a published author, helping you to maximise the impact of your work.”	Home 	Royal Society of Chemistry  IJOIRE 
<p>“all our research has been open access which means it’s free to access from anywhere in the world, and licensed for reuse”</p> <p>“We offer fast publication while providing rigorous peer review to maintain the integrity of information”</p> <p>“We are committed to the highest standards of peer review. The Editorial Board of each journal determines their peer review policy, while maintaining our high standards.”</p>	Home 	BioMed Central 

<p>“We’re committed to promoting your research as widely as we can and providing as much visibility and exposure for your article as possible.”</p>		
<p>[Name of publisher] Editorial Advisory Board is composed of distinguished academics, noted for their expertise, and selected from our editors for journals and book series. [Name of publisher] Editorial Advisory Board plays a central role in steering our commissioning and assessment of book and journal proposals. Editorial Advisory Board members are consulted for proposals in their respective fields of expertise to assist our selection of titles for publication.</p> <p>[Two more copied paragraphs]</p>	<p>Advisory Board </p>	<p>Transnational Press London </p>
<p>[Name of publisher] encourages open access publications to widen the reach for our authors. We offer substantially lower open access article processing charges compared to big publishers. Individual chapters or complete books (edited or authored) are charged a standard Open Access Article Processing Fee.</p> <p>Please get in touch with us via email on [email of publisher] if you are looking for quotes for projects involving special book editions and tailored offers for your funding requirements.</p>	<p>Open Access </p>	<p>Transnational Press London  Intellectual Edge </p>

## Identifying journal publisher information

Our initial approach to identifying changes in publishing entities involved searching for direct declarations of the current publishing entity on the journals' websites. This was considered the most reliable and definitive evidence of such changes. However, only a small subset of journals (6 out of 36) explicitly stated their publisher on their websites. We analysed both current versions of journal websites at various points during 2024 and archived versions accessible via the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine. In some instances, relevant information was at some point available on the publisher's website but was subsequently removed, as shown earlier (Table 2).

Due to the limited transparency on journal websites regarding their current publishers, we consulted two external journal information databases: the ISSN Portal, maintained by the ISSN International Centre responsible for ISSN registrations, and Ulrichsweb, a global serials directory. Unfortunately, neither database provided significant confirmation of changes in publishers for the journals under scrutiny. A few exceptions were noted: the ISSN Portal confirmed Oxbridge as the latest publisher of *Revista Comunicar*, and JFC Corp as the publisher of *The Review of Diabetic Studies* until 2023. Similarly, Ulrichsweb identified Open Access Text as the publisher of *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt*.

Metadata deposited during DOI registration also serves as a valuable resource for identifying the publisher of a journal (or document), as this information is provided directly by the publishers. Additionally, DOI registration agencies have established rules governing the transfer of responsibility for titles and DOIs between members (Crossref, 2021).

Crossref, the DOI registration agency for 28 out of the 36 journals in our analysis, has released annual public metadata files since 2020. To access this information, we built local MongoDB instances of each metadata collection and queried them to retrieve all records related to the journals. As the most recent public metadata file available at the time of analysis was from April 2024, we also used the Crossref public API in January 2025 to obtain the latest metadata for these journals. Our queries used the journals' ISSNs (both print and online when available, or a single ISSN otherwise) as identifiers.

Since Crossref does not implement version control for the metadata it makes public, we believe this approach represents the closest possible method for understanding how and when Crossref metadata records have been modified over time. Given the general lack of transparency regarding not only which publishers have acquired these journals but also when these transactions occurred, we believed this analysis could shed light on both questions simultaneously.

The information we obtained using this process, including the number of records available for each journal in each public data file, and the publisher (or publishers) that were recorded in these records, is available in Appendix 1. The process was useful to confirm publisher changes in some of the journals (12 of them) but not the rest (16), which showed few or no changes. The changes that we identified as most relevant to this analysis are summarised in Table 12.

While Crossref data confirms a change in publisher in 12 journals and provides an upper bound in the timeline of when these changes happened, in some cases the information available does not completely clarify the situation. For example, if we give credit to the theory that JCFCorp and Open Access Text are intermediaries that acquire journals from the original publishers, with the intention to later sell them to other publishers (as some circumstantial evidence suggests), it follows that Crossref data does not reveal which publisher currently own the journals in 7 out of 12 cases.

According to Crossref metadata, three journals have Oxbridge Publishing House as their new publisher since 2023-2024: *Comunicar*, *Kurdish Studies*, and *Transnational Marketing Journal*. The information that *Kurdish Studies* is published by Oxbridge contrasts with the information currently displayed on the journal's website, which states that it is "a trade mark of Society of history and cultural studies, Hong Kong". Both *Kurdish Studies* and *Transnational Marketing Journal* were originally published by Transnational Press London, a publisher whose website content was extensively appropriated by Oxbridge and its associated publishers, as shown in previous sections. *Transnational Marketing Journal* still claims to be published by Transnational Press in its website.

An additional two journals appear to be published by the "Institute for Advanced Studies" (we could not find a website for this publisher). One of the journals is the *Review of International Geographical Education Online*, which has been associated with this publisher since the 2022 Crossref public data file. This contrasts with the listing of the same journal under Intellectual Edge's website in 2023. The second journal attributed to the "Institute for Advanced Studies", is *Fonseca, Journal of Communication*. Previously, there was no known publisher for this journal. The association of this publisher with *Fonseca* since at least 2024 (according to Crossref data) aligns with declarations stating that the journal ceased being published by Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca in 2023 (Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, n.d.-b).

A preliminary analysis of Crossref records listing the "Institute for Advanced Studies" as the publisher reveals that this entity manages 19 journals, including the two mentioned above. Among these, the two journals with the highest number of records in Crossref are the *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education* (1,072 records) and *Neuroquantology* (491 records), both of which were discontinued from Scopus in the past due to publication concerns.

Table 11. Highlighted publisher changes in journals, as found in Crossref data.

Journal name	New publisher	Crossref public data file in which change was first visible
American Journal of Health Behavior	JCF Corp	2022
Central Asia and the Caucasus	JCF Corp	2025
Review of Diabetic Studies	JCF Corp	2021
Tobacco Regulatory Science	JCF Corp	2022
Comunicar	Oxbridge	2024
Kurdish Studies	Oxbridge	2023
Transnational Marketing Journal	Oxbridge	2023
Revista de Psicologia Clinica	Open Access Text	2022
Vascular and Endovascular Review	Open Access Text	2024
Fonseca, Journal of Communication	Institute for Advanced Studies	2024
Review of International Geographical Education Online	Institute for Advanced Studies	2022
Remittances Review	Centivens Institute of Innovative Research	2023

The publisher “Centivens Institute of Innovative Research,” which, according to Crossref, has published the journal *Remittances Review* since at least 2023, also manages four other journals. Among these is *Revista Geintec-Gestão Inovação e Tecnologias* (1,380 records in Crossref), which was originally published by Universidade Federal de Sergipe in Brazil and was indexed in Web of Science’s Emerging Sources Citation Index until 2021.

To conclude the analysis of Crossref historical data, we find that journals with clear evidence of a publisher change sometimes show no indication of this transition in Crossref data. For instance, *Profesional de la Información* was transferred to Oxbridge at the beginning of 2024, and since then, 98 new DOIs have been created for articles in this journal (Appendix 1). However, the publisher listed for these records, as well as all earlier ones, continues to be

“Ediciones Profesionales de la Información SL,” the journal’s former publisher, even though this entity remains operational independently of Oxbridge.








In the absence of transparency from reliable channels, most of the evidence linking these journals to Oxbridge Publishing House or its affiliated publishers comes from declarations on the new publishers’ own websites (28 journals), public statements by former editors or editorial board members of the journals, and publicly available publication fee invoices.









The lack of reliable and complete journal publisher information is a significant issue in itself, but it also poses challenges for our current analysis. For example, it makes it difficult to pinpoint the moment when the journals were transferred, increases the likelihood that we may have overlooked other journals acquired by these publishers, and also increases the likelihood that some journals identified may have subsequently changed ownership without leaving publicly accessible records. Despite these limitations, we believe the list of journals we have compiled so far provides a valuable starting point for understanding and analysing this phenomenon of “stealth” journal transfers.

### **Journals linked to *Oxbridge Publishing House* and its network**








Based on the information gathered thus far, along with a web search of the publishers’ names to identify any potentially missing journals, we compiled a list of 36 journals that exhibit some connection to the aforementioned publishers (Table 11).









Table 12. Journals that have been claimed to be published by Oxbridge Publishing House and related companies. Data consulted on 15/01/2025.





Country of origin	Journal name	ISSN	Publisher (ISSN portal)	Publisher (Ulrich's)	Conflicting ownership claim	WoS index status	Scopus index status
	<a href="#">Przestrzeń Społeczna / Social Space Journal</a>	2084-1558	Rzeszów "Bosqo"	Uniwersytet Rzeszowski...	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Not indexed	2018-2022
	<a href="#">Cuadernos de Economía / Spanish Journal of Economics and Finance</a>	2340-6704	Elsevier (until 2018)	Universidad Autonoma de Madrid...	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-10)	1978, 2011-2024
	<a href="#">Transnational Marketing Journal</a>	2041-4684	Publisher not declared	Transnational Press London	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Not indexed	2018-2023
	<a href="#">Croatian International Relations Review</a>	1848-5782	Zagreb, CIRR	Institut za Medunarodne...	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-12)	2013-2022
	<a href="#">Kurdish Studies</a>	2051-4883	Publisher not declared	Transnational Press London	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-03)	2013-2022 Discontinued: Publication concerns
	<a href="#">Revista Comunicar</a>	1988-3293	Earliest: Comunicar. Latest: Oxbridge	Grupo Comunicar	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-11)	2008-2023
	<a href="#">Profesional de la Información</a>	1699-2407	Publisher not declared	Ed. Profesionales de la Información	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a>	Actively indexed in SSCI	2006-2024



Country of origin	Journal name	ISSN	Publisher (ISSN portal)	Publisher (Ulrich's)	Conflicting ownership claim	WoS index status	Scopus index status
	<a href="#">Revista de Psicología del Deporte / Journal of Sport Psychology</a>	1988-5636	Publisher not declared	Universitat de les Illes Balears	<a href="#">Oxbridge</a> / <a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-12)	2008-2024
	<a href="#">International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences</a>	0973-5089	Publisher not declared	Manonmaniam Sundaranar...	<a href="#">H&amp;N</a> / <a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-12)	2017-2024
	<a href="#">International Journal of Instructional Cases</a>	2399-830X	Publisher not declared	Journal not covered	<a href="#">H&amp;N</a>	Not indexed	2017-2024
	<a href="#">International Journal of Cyber Criminology</a>	0974-2891	Publisher not declared	International Journal of Cyber Criminology	<a href="#">H&amp;N</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-12)	2012-2024
	<a href="#">Artseduca</a>	2254-0709	Valencia: Anna M. Vernia, 2012-	Universitat Jaume I	<a href="#">H&amp;N</a>	Actively indexed in ESCI	2019-2024
	<a href="#">American Journal of Health Behavior</a>	1945-7359	PNG Publications	PNG Publications	<a href="#">PNG</a> (UK)	Actively indexed in SSCI	1996-2024
	<a href="#">Archives of Clinical Psychiatry</a>	1806-938X	Universidade de São Paulo	Universidade de Sao Paulo	<a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Editorial De-listing (2023)	2000-2023 Discontinued: RADAR
	<a href="#">Journal of Agrobiotechnology Management &amp; Economics (AgBioForum)</a>	1522-936X	Publisher not declared	University of Missouri	<a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Not indexed	1998-2024



Country of origin	Journal name	ISSN	Publisher (ISSN portal)	Publisher (Ulrich's)	Conflicting ownership claim	WoS index status	Scopus index status
	<a href="#">International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management</a>	1082-1910	Indiana University Northwest (until 2022)	International Journal of Operations... Quantitative	<a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Not indexed	2000-2024
	<a href="#">Eurasian Journal of Educational Research</a>	2528-8911	Earliest: Ani yayincilik Latest: Ankara, Özer Daşcan	Ani Yayincilik	<a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Actively indexed in ESCI	2008-2024
	<a href="#">Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics</a>	2149-1135	Ankara, İsmail Hakkı Erten	Hacettepe University	<a href="#">Wisdom</a>	Editorial De-listing (2024-12)	2018-2024
	<a href="#">HIV Nursing</a>	1474-7359	Publisher not declared	Mediscript Ltd.	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Not indexed	2006-2016, 2018-2020, 2022
	<a href="#">Remittances Review</a>	2059-6588	Publisher not declared	Transnational Press London	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Not indexed	2019, 2021-2022 Discontinued Publication concerns
	<a href="#">Central Asia &amp; the Caucasus</a>	2002-3839	Publisher not declared	C A & C C Press AB	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Not indexed	2013-2021 Discontinued Publication concerns
	<a href="#">Review of International Geographical Education Online</a>	2146-0353	Eskişehir, Eyüp Artvinli	Review of International...	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Not indexed	2017-2021 Discontinued Publication concerns

Country of origin	Journal name	ISSN	Publisher (ISSN portal)	Publisher (Ulrich's)	Conflicting ownership claim	WoS index status	Scopus index status
	<a href="#">Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy</a>	0976-2779	Medknow Publications (until 2013)	Wolters Kluwer – Medknow Pub...	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Not indexed	2010-2021 Discontinued Publication Concerns
	Pal Arch's Journal of Archeology of Egypt / Egyptology	1567-214X	Publisher not declared	Open Access Text	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Not indexed	2012-2013, 2015, 2017, 2019
	<a href="#">Tobacco Regulatory Science</a>	2333-9748	Tobacco Regulatory Science Group	Tobacco Regulatory Science	<a href="#">Intellectual Edge</a>	Editorial De-listing (2023)	2020-2021 Discontinued: Publication concerns
	<a href="#">Journal of Commercial Biotechnology</a>	1478-565X	Palgrave Macmillan (until 2011)	thinkBiotech (USA)	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2023-2024
	<a href="#">FishTaxa - Journal of Fish Taxonomy</a>	2458-942X	Nevşehir: Erdoğan çiçek	Journal not covered	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2019-2024
	<a href="#">Vascular and Endovascular Review</a>	2516-3302	Bourne End: Radcliffe Vascular	Radcliffe Vascular	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2018-2024
	<a href="#">Jornal Brasileiro de Patologia e Medicina Laboratorial</a>	1676-2444	Rio de Janeiro RJ: Sociedade Brasileira de	Sociedade Brasileira de Patologia Clínica	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2001-2002, 2006-2024
	<a href="#">Journal of Natural Science, Biology &amp; Medicine</a>	2229-7707	Medknow Publications	Wolters Kluwer / Medknow Publications	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2010-2024

Country of origin	Journal name	ISSN	Publisher (ISSN portal)	Publisher (Ulrich's)	Conflicting ownership claim	WoS index status	Scopus index status
	<a href="#">The Review of Diabetic Studies</a>	1614-0575	JFCORP (until 2023)	Society for Biomedical Diabetes Research	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2007-2024
	<a href="#">Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte / International Journal of Medicine and Science of Physical Activity and Sport</a>	1577-0354	[Madrid]: [Vicente Martínez de Haro]; RedIris	Red Iris	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Actively indexed in SCI	2008-2024
	<a href="#">Journal of Carcinogenesis</a>	1477-3163	Earliest: BioMed Central Latest: Carcinogenesis Press by Medknow Pub...	Wolters Kluwer - Medknow Publications	<a href="#">Thinkbiotech</a>	Not indexed	2002-2024
	<a href="#">Journal of Modern Project Management</a>	2317-3963	Publisher not declared	Editora Mundo	<a href="#">Versemark</a>	Not indexed	2013-2024

Country of origin	Journal name	ISSN	Publisher (ISSN portal)	Publisher (Ulrich's)	Conflicting ownership claim	WoS index status	Scopus index status
	<a href="#">Fonseca, Journal of Communication</a>	2172-9077	Universidad de Salamanca	Universidad de Salamanca	<a href="#">USAL declares not to be publisher after Vol. 26 (2023). Name of new publisher not found</a>	Actively indexed in ESCI	2015, 2019-2024
	<a href="#">Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica</a>	0327-6716	Buenos Aires, Fundación Aiglé	Fundacion Aigle	<a href="#">Director since 2020 associated to Oxbridge founders. Name of publisher not found.</a>	Indexed in SCI/SSCI until 2019	2008-2020 Discontinued RADAR

## **Indexing (and de-indexing) of journals in Scopus and Web of Science**

Once the list of journals was finalized, we assessed their indexing status in both Web of Science and Scopus, as inclusion in these databases is a key factor influencing researchers' decisions to publish in specific journals, and potentially also the factor that makes these journals attractive to journal buyers.

Of the 36 journals identified, 17 have been indexed at some point in the Web of Science Core Collection, while all 36 are, or have been, indexed in Scopus. This aligns with the idea that these journals' primary value to acquiring publishers lies in their coverage by these prestigious indexing services.

Among the 17 journals indexed in Web of Science, 10 have been editorially de-listed, and one additional journal's coverage ceased after 2019 without being explicitly marked as de-listed. Editorial de-listing occurs when a journal is re-evaluated and found to no longer meet one or more quality criteria, leading to its removal from the Web of Science Core Collection (Clarivate Analytics, n.d.-a). Most of these de-listings occurred in 2024 (8 journals), with the remaining two journals de-listed in 2023. Given that buyout accounts trace back to around 2021 and many of the associated publishing companies were established in 2022 or 2023, it is plausible that these de-listings occurred after, or were potentially triggered by, changes implemented under new ownership.

According to the December 2024 Scopus source list, 8 out of the 36 journals have been discontinued in Scopus. The reasons cited are "publication concerns" (6 journals) and "RADAR" (a proprietary analytics algorithm designed to identify outlier performance) (2 journals) (Elsevier, n.d.). The final years of coverage for these discontinued journals range from 2020 to 2023. Additionally, six journals not yet officially marked as discontinued did not have any indexed content for the publication year 2024 as of January 18, 2025. However, these dates are in some cases masking a retroactive de-indexing of documents that have at some point available in Scopus, as we will show below.

During our investigation of this phenomenon in 2024, we gradually identified more journals linked to these publishers, prompting us to download Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus data at multiple points in time to expand our analysis: we ultimately extracted data from both WoS core collection and Scopus on March 5, 2024, June 30, 2024, and January 17, 2025.

This enabled us to detect discrepancies across the three datasets, most notably the retroactive removal of certain records between March and June 2024, and again between June 2024 and January 2025, in Scopus data (Table 13).

Table 13. Distribution of deleted records in Scopus across three different dates, by Source title, Volume, issue, and year of publication

Scopus records missing on January 17 <sup>th</sup> 2025 that were available on March 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024		
Source title	Volume (issue), year	N <sup>o</sup> of records missing
<b>Artseduca</b>	(35), 2023	1
	(29), 2021	1
<b>Comunicar</b>	31(77), 2023	1
<b>Croatian International Relations Review</b>	29(93), 2023	14
	29(92), 2023	11
	28(91), 2023	5
<b>Kurdish Studies</b>	12(2), 2024	22
	12(1), 2024	271
	11(3), 2023	50
	11(2), 2023	423
	11(1), 2023	31
<b>Przestrzen Spoleczna</b>	23(4), 2023	4
	23(3), 2023	14
	23(2), 2023	20
	23(1), 2023	21
Scopus records missing on January 17 <sup>th</sup> 2025 that were available on June 6 <sup>th</sup> 2024 (also excluding those available on March 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024)		
Source title	Volume (issue), year	N <sup>o</sup> of records missing
<b>Comunicar</b>	32(78), 2024	20
<b>Croatian International Relations Review</b>	29(94), 2023	9
	29(93), 2023	2
<b>Przestrzen Spoleczna</b>	24(1), 2024	23
	23(4), 2023	15
	23(3), 2023	3
<b>Review of Diabetic Studies</b>	9(2-3), 2012	1

Using the EID field available in the Scopus dataset (internal Scopus record ID), we determined that the retroactive de-indexing affected six journals in our analysis, resulting in the removal of 962 records. Most of these records pertained to documents published in 2023 (624 records, 65%) and 2024 (336 records, 35%).

The journal most significantly impacted was *Kurdish Studies*. In March 2024, 797 records of articles published in this journal during 2023 and 2024 were available. However, all these records had been removed by the second data extraction in June 2024. This aligns with the information available in the December 2024 Scopus source list, which indicates that *Kurdish Studies* was indexed only for content published between 2018 and 2022.

A similar pattern was observed with other journals. For example, the June 2024 dataset included 20 records encompassing the entirety of *Comunicar* Issue 78, published in 2024. Notably, this issue was the first to feature articles managed under the leadership of Oxbridge Publishing House. Furthermore, according to an statement by an author who contributed to this issue, it also included articles that “were reviewed by the former editorial team” (Mosquera Gende, 2025). All 20 records about articles from this issue were absent in the January 2025 dataset extracted from Scopus, with the database now listing coverage for *Comunicar* only from 2008 to 2023. Therefore, it is important to note that record removal also affects journals that have not been officially discontinued in Scopus, such as the current example.

As far as we know, Scopus does not maintain a public registry of removed records. This makes it impossible to determine whether retroactive de-indexing affected other journals in our analysis prior to our first data extraction.

In contrast, record deletions in Web of Science appear to be minimal compared to those of Scopus. Between the March 2024 and June 2024 datasets, six records were removed, and between the June 2024 and January 2025 datasets, two additional records were no longer available.

To provide the most comprehensive illustration of the phenomenon under analysis, the remainder of our study will rely on a consolidated dataset that integrates records from the January 2025 dataset with those uniquely available in the March and June 2024 datasets, when using WoS or Scopus data.

### **DOI management: Use and propagation of fake DOIs**

The data presented in Appendix 1 reveals that a significant number of journals in our analysis have created very few or no DOIs in recent years. Of the 28 journals that use (or have used) Crossref DOIs, the majority (23) had ceased DOI registration around the release of the 2023 Crossref public data file or earlier (Table 14). Notably, the 2022 Crossref public data file is the last one in which nearly half of these journals (13) exhibited a substantial increase in records compared to previous files. As of January 2025, only three journals continue to actively register DOIs: *American Journal of Health Behavior*, *Comunicar*, and *Profesional de la Información*.

Table 14. Distribution of journals by the most recent Crossref public data file showing an increase of at least 10 records compared to the previous file, with no more than 10 additional records created in total in all subsequent years.

<b>Year of Crossref public data file / API request</b>	<b>Nº of journals</b>
<b>2020</b>	1
<b>2021</b>	3
<b>2022</b>	13
<b>2023</b>	6
<b>2024</b>	2
<b>2025</b>	3

This information stands in contrast to the DOI data available in Web of Science and Scopus for records related to these journals, where our preliminary analysis revealed no evident scarcity of DOIs in recent years. Additionally, an informal review of papers published in recent years on the journals’ own websites, identified instances where DOIs failed to resolve, suggesting they had not been registered with any DOI registration agency. To assess the extent of this issue and determine whether fake DOIs may have potentially been used in journal websites and propagated beyond them, we analyzed the DOIs of papers from these journals as listed in Web of Science and Scopus.

It is important to note that our definition of “fake DOI” differs from that of Crossref (Bilder, 2016). Crossref distinguishes between “DOI-like strings” (strings of alphanumeric characters that resemble DOI syntax but are not registered DOIs) and “fake DOIs” (registered DOIs that point to fake content). In contrast, we define “fake DOIs” as DOI-like strings that are presented as DOIs on journal websites, in document PDFs, or submitted as DOIs to bibliographic databases, but are not actually registered with a DOI agency. While we acknowledge that some DOI-like strings may not be fake DOIs—for example, when a publisher uses a similar ID syntax for internal IDs (against Crossref’s recommendations) but does not refer to them as DOIs—we argue that the defining characteristic of a fake DOI is its public presentation as a DOI, without being registered with a DOI agency. Therefore, what Crossref labels as a “fake DOI”, we would consider a real DOI (since it is registered and resolves), even if it points to fake content, or if its main function is to serve as a bot trap.

To determine the existence of fake DOIs in our WoS and Scopus datasets, we carried out the following procedure:

1. We compiled a list of all DOIs available in our WoS and Scopus datasets. We identified 18,854 unique DOIs in our data.



2. Then, we searched this list of DOIs in our local version of the 2024 Crossref public data file. This way, 11,658 DOIs (almost 62% of the total) were confirmed to be registered.
3. Because Crossref is not the only registration agency used by the journals in our list, and also because the 2024 Crossref data file is not completely up to date, we resolved the remaining 7,196 DOIs using content negotiation (obtaining a json record if the DOI is registered, and a 404 status code if it is not). An additional 676 DOIs were confirmed to be registered, and a 404 status code at domain doi.org was recorded for 6,519 records (34.5%). We considered these as fake DOIs. There was also one request error, because the string did not follow the DOI syntax.

An analysis of the distribution of fake DOIs across all journals in our dataset reveals that 1,014 fake DOIs were propagated to Web of Science, while 6,345 fake DOIs were propagated to Scopus (some of these are no longer in the live version of Scopus, because of the record de-indexing issue described earlier). Of these, 92% of the fake DOIs in the Web of Science dataset and 95% of those in the Scopus dataset correspond to documents published between 2020 and 2024 (Figure 6).

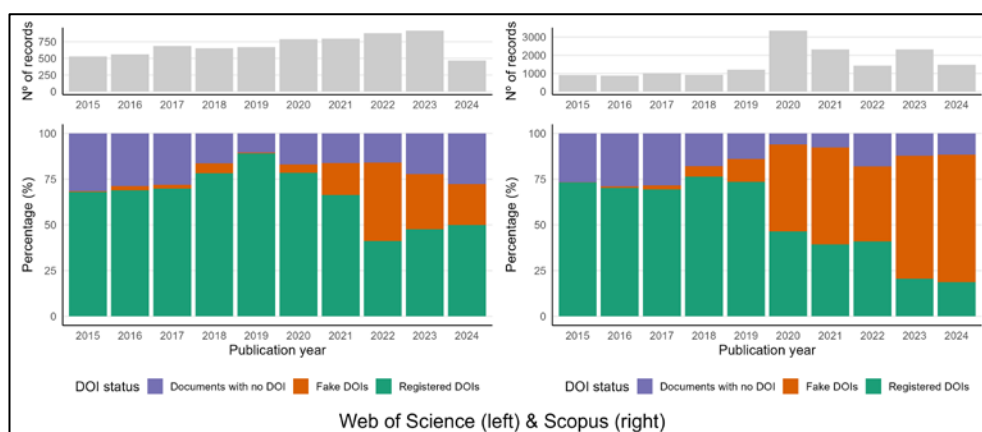


Figure 7. Distribution of registered and fake DOIs propagated by the journals under analysis to Web of Science and Scopus

The data indicates that, while some fake DOIs can be found in WoS and Scopus data for documents published in earlier years, the prevalence of fake DOIs has surged dramatically over the past five years. This surge aligns with the period during which control of these journals was transferred to new publishers.

At the journal level, 21 of the 36 journals exhibit a similar pattern: the majority or all the documents published in the past 3–4 years include fake DOIs (Appendix 2). In terms of volume, the journal contributing the highest number of fake DOIs, based on our Scopus data, is *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy* (1,539). Additionally, 13 journals each contribute at least 100 fake DOIs to Scopus (Table

15). The coverage of eight out of these 13 journals remains active on Scopus and includes documents published as recently as 2024.

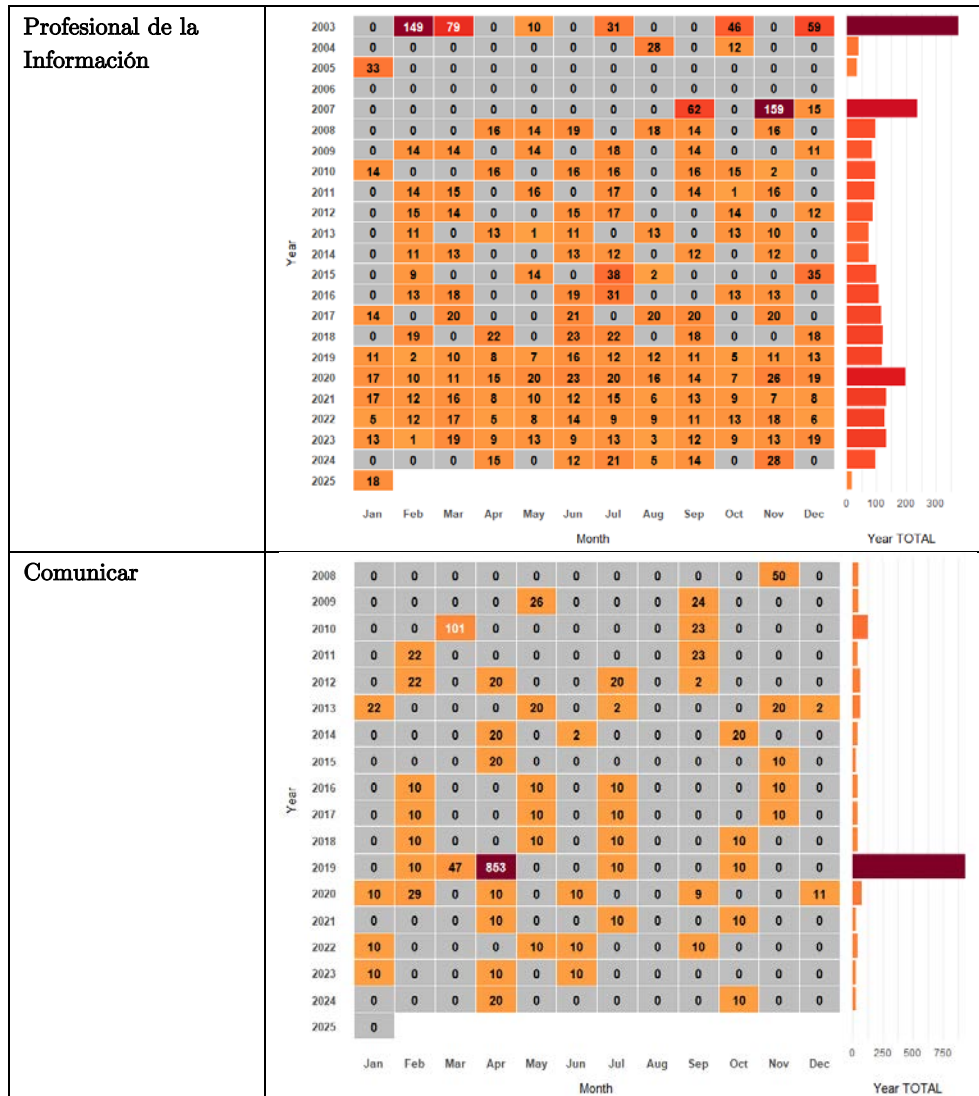
As noted earlier, not all journals resort to using fake DOIs after being acquired by new publishers. For example, according to Crossref data, after *Profesional de la Información* came under the control of Oxbridge on January 1, 2024, there was a three-month pause in DOI registration. However, the journal resumed DOI registration in April 2024, creating a total of 95 DOIs that year and 18 DOIs so far in 2025 (Table 16). Similarly, in the case of *Comunicar*, the DOIs for Issue 77 (the last issue under the previous ownership) were registered in June 2023. Following a nine-month hiatus, 20 DOIs were registered in April 2024 for Issue 78, and an additional 10 DOIs were registered in October 2024 for Issue 79.

However, an exploratory review of the Crossref metadata records for documents published in these two journals before and after their recent acquisition reveals notable changes in metadata deposit practices. For example, while both journals previously deposited reference lists in Crossref at the time of DOI registration, this practice ceased starting with Vol. 33, Issue 1 (2024) for *Profesional de la Información* and Vol. 32, Issue 78 (2024) for *Comunicar*—the first issues published under Oxbridge’s management.

Table 15. Journals that contribute at least 100 fake DOIs to Scopus

Journal	Nº of fake DOIs in Scopus	Scopus coverage status
<b>Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy</b>	1,539	Discontinued
<b>Review of International Geographical Education Online</b>	974	Discontinued
<b>Kurdish Studies</b>	797	Discontinued
<b>Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte</b>	437	2008-2024
<b>Archives of Clinical Psychiatry</b>	410	Discontinued
<b>Eurasian Journal of Educational Research</b>	327	2008-2024
<b>Journal of Commercial Biotechnology</b>	322	2003-2024
<b>Journal of Modern Project Management</b>	255	2013-2024
<b>Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics</b>	204	2018-2024
<b>Journal of Natural Science, Biology and Medicine</b>	183	2010-2024
<b>Cuadernos de Economía</b>	133	2011-2024
<b>Artseduca</b>	130	2019-2024
<b>Croatian International Relations Review</b>	100	2013-2022

Table 16. Dates of DOI creation in Profesional de la Información, and Comunicar, according to Crossref.



An additional check we did not systematically conduct involves verifying whether registered DOIs resolve to the correct documents. However, we are aware of at least one case where this is systematically not the case. In the *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, DOIs were legitimately generated by Zenodo before the publisher transfer, but now, after the transfer, the journal wrongfully appropriates Zenodo DOIs that belong to other documents. For example, the journal claims that the DOI “10.5281/zenodo.4766801” belongs to the article “The Electronic Contract in Civil and Commercial Codes”, which is the first article in Vol. 18, Issue 1, June 2024. However, when this DOI is resolved, it redirects to “FIGURE 1 in Studies on Neotropical Crickets: New Species and Notes on the

Classification of Field Crickets Genera *Anurogryllus* and *Gryllus* (Orthoptera: Gryllidae: Gryllinae)”, which is a figure from an article about crickets published in the journal *Zootaxa* (Figure 8).

The screenshot displays two overlapping pages. The top page is the journal's header for 'International Journal of Cyber Criminology', Vol 18 Issue 1 January – June 2024. It features an 'open access' logo and a copyright notice for 2024. A DOI '10.5281/zenodo.4766801' is listed, which is a misappropriation. The article title is 'The Electronic Contract in Civil and Commercial Codes' by Ahmad Mahmoud Al Masadeh, Ahmed M. Khawaldeh, and Mohammad Assaf Al-salamat. The bottom page is a Zenodo repository entry for the same article, showing the correct DOI '10.5281/zenodo.4766802' and 75 views and 85 downloads.

Figure 8. Wrongful appropriation of a real DOI by *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*

The second article in Vol. 18, Issue 1, June 2024 of *International Journal of Cyber Crimonology* wrongfully claims the DOI “10.5281/zenodo.4766802”, the third article claims the DOI “10.5281/zenodo.4766803”... and so on, suggesting that the appropriation of DOIs is not fortuitous, but a systematic practice in this journal. The *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences* engages in the same practice. Such misattributions undermine the integrity of the DOI system and may lead to confusion or misrepresentation of the original content associated with these DOIs.

Lastly, our analysis does not verify the presence of additional fake DOIs on journal websites, which have not yet propagated to databases.

## Changes in country of affiliation of authors

To examine how the publishing communities of these journals have evolved following their acquisition by new publishers, we compiled a consolidated dataset integrating data from both WoS and Scopus. Using previously identified evidence of publisher changes—such as official declarations where available—and contextual indicators, such as the onset of fake DOI usage in certain instances, we determined the specific volumes and issues overseen by the new publishers. We then analysed the affiliation countries of authors, dividing each journal into two distinct periods: before and after the publisher transition.

Notably, many of the journals under analysis exhibit a significant shift toward affiliations from Middle Eastern, East Asian, and Southeast Asian countries—such as China, Indonesia, Iraq, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand—countries that had minimal representation in these journals prior to the transition (Figure 9). Appendix 3 provides visual representations on changes in the countries of affiliation before and after the publisher transition, analysed at the level of individual journals.

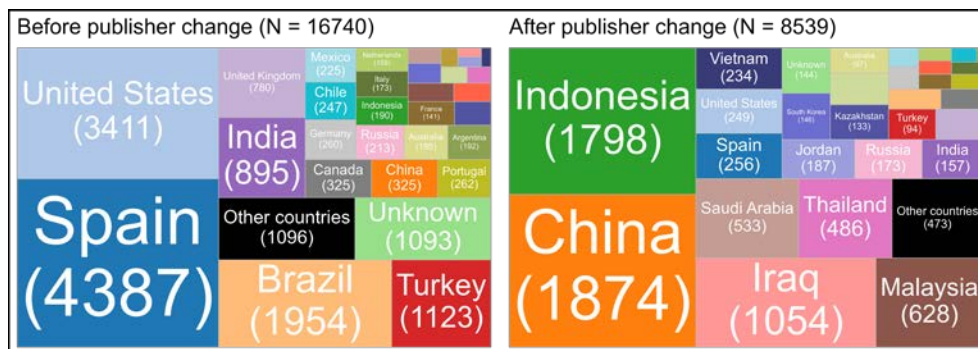


Figure 9. Comparison of authors' countries of affiliation across all journals, before and after publisher change. N represents documents

Additionally, we found that in 18 out of the 36 journals in our dataset, at least 50% of the documents published prior to the publisher transition were authored by researchers affiliated with institutions in the same country where the journal was established (Table 17). These could be described as national journals for the sake of this analysis.

In national journals, the percentage of authors affiliated with the journal's country of origin has significantly declined since the publisher transition. These decreases range from 77 percentage points (from 90% to 13% in *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte*) to 10 percentage points (from 55% to 45% in *Comunicar*, for which only one post-transition issue is available in databases).

Table 17. Changes in proportion of documents authored by researchers affiliated to the country of origin of the journal, before and after publisher transition

Country of origin (CoO)	Journal name	% by CoO BEFORE	% by CoO AFTER
	Artseduca	51%	8%
	Cuadernos de Economía	68%	6%
	Fonseca, Journal of Communication	81%	59%
	Profesional de la Información	85%	48%
	Revista Comunicar	55%	45%
	Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte	90%	13%
	Revista de Psicología del Deporte	74%	13%
	HIV Nursing	73%	0%
	International Journal of Instructional Cases	3%	0%
	Journal of Carcinogenesis	4%	4%
	Kurdish Studies	20%	1%
	Remittances Review	8%	-
	Transnational Marketing Journal	12%	2%
	Vascular and Endovascular Review	2%	1%
	American Journal of Health Behavior	85%	31%
	International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management	36%	0%
	Journal of Agrobiotechnology Management & Economics (AgBioForum)	55%	2%
	Journal of Commercial Biotechnology	39%	4%
	Tobacco Regulatory Science	83%	-
	International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences	18%	3%
	International Journal of Cyber Criminology	5%	1%
	Journal of Natural Science, Biology & Medicine	73%	36%
	Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy	76%	1%
	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics	59%	0%
	Eurasian Journal of Educational Research	81%	0%
	FishTaxa - Journal of Fish Taxonomy	20%	3%
	Review of International Geographical Education...	43%	1%
	Archives of Clinical Psychiatry	76%	3%
	Journal of Modern Project Management	9%	6%
	Jornal Brasileiro de Patologia e Medicina Laboratorial	94%	54%
	Central Asia & the Caucasus	0%	0%
	Croatian International Relations Review	27%	0%
	PalArch's Journal of Archeology of Egypt...	0%	-
	Przestrzeń Społeczna / Social Space Journal	51%	1%
	Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica	26%	0%
	The Review of Diabetic Studies	5%	4%

## Changes in author publication fees

Using the journals' websites and archived versions available on the Internet Archive, we gathered information about author publishing charges (APCs) required by the journals before and after their transition to new publishers. Our findings reveal a diverse range of pricing structures, complicating direct comparisons.

For instance, some journals implement tiered pricing based on the authors' geographical region. An example is *Revista de Psicología del Deporte*, which declares to charge a discounted fee of GBP 2,500 to authors from Spain and Brazil, compared to GBP 5,000 for authors from other regions.

Other journals adjust their fees based on current indexing status. For example, *Vascular and Endovascular Review* waives publishing fees if the journal is not indexed in major databases such as PubMed, Scopus, or ESCI, but imposes charges when the journal is indexed in these platforms.

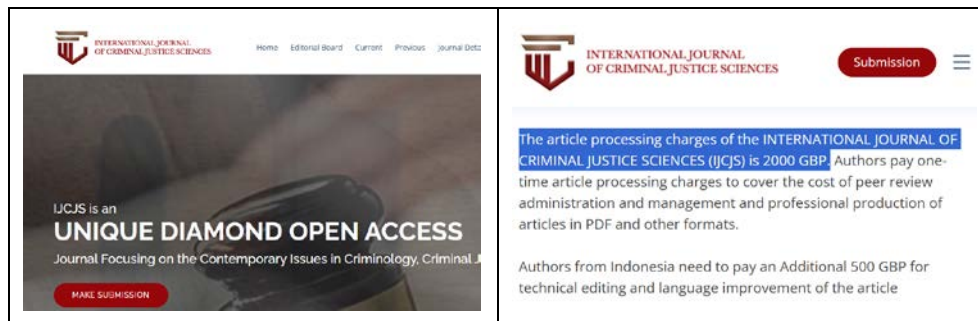
Some journals impose additional charges beyond the basic publication fee, such as fees for exceeding a specified number of pages, including extra tables or graphs, or other supplementary elements. Notably, some journals also impose withdrawal fees, which apply if authors wish to withdraw their article after it has reached "a certain stage in the publication process". Examples of journals with such withdrawal fees include *Artseduca*, *Cuadernos de Economía*, *Revista de Psicología del Deporte*, and *Transnational Marketing Journal*. These practices further complicate the already diverse landscape of publishing charges.

Other journals, such as *Profesional de la Información*, introduced a higher-cost publication option called "Express OA", which offered expedited peer review (under 15 days). This model was already in place before the journal's acquisition and has apparently been continued following the publisher transition.

Some journals exhibit unique fee arrangements. For instance, before its acquisition, *Comunicar* did not charge publication fees to authors. However, when the document being published originated from a funded project, the journal required authors to purchase "15-35 print copies" for promotional purposes.

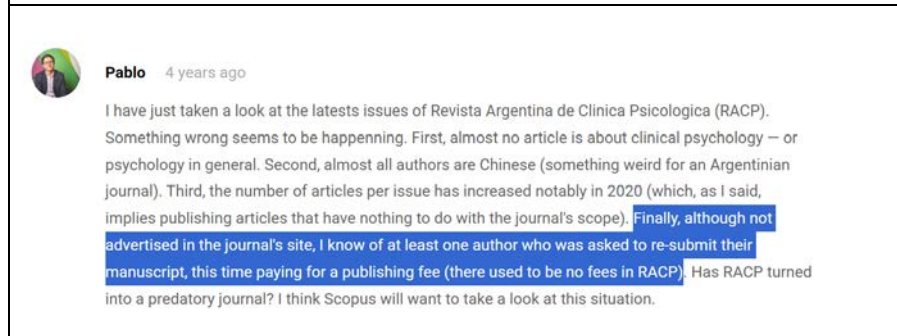

Some journals provide contradictory statements about their publication models. For example, after acquisition, the *International Journal of Cyber Criminology* for some time declared that "IJCC is an unique Diamond open access, international journal, where the author(s) need pay article processing charges. APC of Each paper is \$3000." Similarly, the *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences* still declares to be a "unique diamond open access" on its homepage, but charges GBP 2000 as article processing charges (Table 18).

Table 18. Contradiction in publishing model of International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences. Both screenshots taken from live website on January 27, 2025



In some cases, information about publication fees was unavailable. For instance, *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica* changed publishers in 2020, but no publication fee details are provided on the journal’s website after the transition. However, external sources suggest that some publication fees were, in fact, introduced after the transition (Table 19).

Table 19. Declaration about change in publication fee requirements in Revista de Clínica Psicológica

Screenshot	URL
	

Despite the variability in pricing structures and the presence of contradictory or unclear information, certain patterns emerge. In at least 16 of the 36 journals, no publication fees were charged prior to their acquisition by the new publisher, but a fee ranging from £1,000 to £5,000 was introduced afterward (with most set at £2,000) (Table 20). Additionally, at least 11 journals that already had a fee before acquisition saw their fees increase after the transition.



Table 20. Comparison of author publication fees before and after publisher change

Journal name	Fees BEFORE publisher change		Fees AFTER publisher change	
Artseduca	No fee		£2.000	
Cuadernos de Economía	Not found		£2.000	
Fonseca, Journal of Communication	No fee		£2.000	
Profesional de la Información	€1.250+VAT		£2.100	
Revista Comunicar	No fee		£1.000+VAT	
Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física...	€350		€310+VAT	
Revista de Psicología del Deporte	€300		£5.000	
HIV Nursing	Not found		Unknown fee	
International Journal of Instructional Cases	No fee		£2.000	
Journal of Carcinogenesis	\$1.500		\$2.000	
Kurdish Studies	£450		\$1.099	
Remittances Review	£450		\$800	
Transnational Marketing Journal	£450		£2.000	
Vascular and Endovascular Review	Varies		Varies	
American Journal of Health Behavior	Aprox. \$1595		£2.000	
International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management	\$20 per page		£2.000	
Journal of Agrobiotechnology Management & Economics (AgBioForum)	No fee		£2.000	
Journal of Commercial Biotechnology	No fee		\$3.000	
Tobacco Regulatory Science	\$650 (hybrid)		\$1500	
International Journal of Criminal Justice...	No fee		£2.000	
International Journal of Cyber Criminology	No fee		\$3.000	
Journal of Natural Science, Biology &...	\$800 per 5 pages		£2.000	
Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy	\$300		\$2200	
Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics	No fee		£2.000	
Eurasian Journal of Educational Research	No fee		£2.000	
FishTaxa - Journal of Fish Taxonomy	No fee		\$1500	
Review of International Geographical...	€200		\$1000	
Archives of Clinical Psychiatry	No fee		\$3.000	
Journal of Modern Project Management	\$800 (hybrid)		£2.000	
Jornal Brasileiro de Patologia e Medicina Laboratorial	No fee		\$850	
Central Asia & the Caucasus	No fee		\$1200	
Croatian International Relations Review	No fee		£2.000	
PalArch's Journal of Archeology of Egypt...	Not found		Not found	
Przeźrzeń Społeczna	No fee		£2.000	
Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica	No fee declared		No fee declared	
The Review of Diabetic Studies	~\$1000		~\$1000	

## Changes in editorial positions

The editorial published by Begoña Gutiérrez San Miguel in May 2024, announcing her decision to step down as director and editor of *Fonseca, Journal of Communication* (Gutiérrez-San-Miguel, 2024), coupled with the fact that she is still currently listed as the journal's director and editor, suggests that the editorial positions listed on the journals' websites after the publisher transition may not accurately reflect the current leadership.

While this aspect warrants a systematic analysis, which will be conducted at a later date, our analysis revealed several notable instances. For example, on the editorial team page of *Cuadernos de Economía*, José Ramón Lasuén is listed as the journal's president. However, this Spanish economist and politician passed away on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 ("José Ramón Lasuén Sancho," 2025).

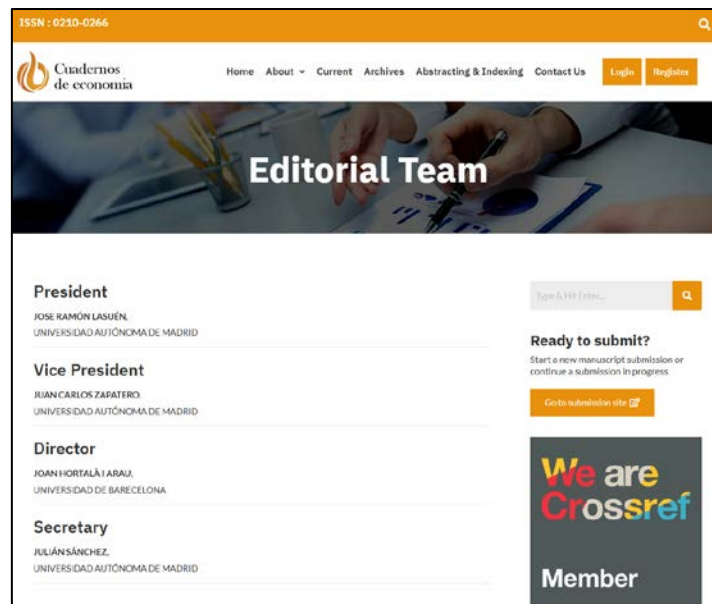


Figure 10. Editorial team at journal *Cuadernos de Economía*. Screenshot taken on January 27th, 2025

More strangely, most of the individuals listed on that page also appear on the editorial board of *Revista de Economía y Finanzas*<sup>9</sup>, a journal that claims to supersede *Cuadernos de Economía*, even though both journals have continued to publish content separately, at least until 2024.

After *Profesional de la Información* was acquired by Oxbridge Publishing House, Tomàs Baiget was listed as “Editor in Chief for Europe and the Americas”, a newly created title that had not been previously used by the journal. Given that,




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<sup>9</sup> <https://reveyf.es/index.php/REyF/about/editorialTeam>

following this publisher transition, the number of articles from researchers in Asia has significantly increased (especially from China, but also some from Saudi Arabia and Malaysia), it raises the question of who is managing submissions from authors outside of Europe or the Americas.

While in many journals, the lists of editorial positions have displayed few or no changes since the publisher transition, in other journals we have detected a rapid succession of changes in editorial positions. For example, while in May of 2023 the editorial positions in *Archives of Clinical Psychology*, a journal originally published by the University of Sao Paulo, were mainly occupied by researchers affiliated with institutions in Brazil (at least 18 out of 25 positions), by October of 2023 the entire list had changed, listing Professor Wang Wang, from Zhejiang Chinese Medical University (China) as editor, and researchers from Australia, China, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Ireland, Iran, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, USA, and Kyrgyzstan as the editorial board (no researchers from Brazil remained). Furthermore, by February of 2024, only four months later, the list had entirely changed once again. This time, no editor was listed, only the editorial team, which consisted of researchers from Egypt, China, Turkey, Brazil, Poland, Portugal, Tunisia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Italy, and India (Table 21).










Table 21. Changes in editorial positions in Archives of Clinical Psychiatry

23/05/2023	04/10/2023	26/02/2024
		

### Changes in thematic focus of journals

Circumstantial evidence suggests that the topics of the documents published in acquired journals significantly change after journal transition. While we will dedicate a separate analysis to this issue, here we provide a list of examples that are consistent with said claim (Table 22).

Table 22. Examples of journals publishing articles which are outside their thematic scope

Journal	Article title	URL
Kurdish Studies	Improvement Of Algorithm Design And Analysis And Autonomous Learning Ability By Project-Based Blended Learning (PJBBL) Model For Undergraduate Students	
	Nurses' Perceptions Regarding the Use of The Nursing Process; A Qualitative Study at A Public Tertiary Care Hospital, Peshawar, Pakistan (Enhancing the Quality of Nursing Care in the Public Sectors of Pakistan)	
	A Review of Monitoring and Evaluation Processes of South Africa's Good Governance Practices	
Archives of Clinical Psychiatry	Multifunctional biological scaffolds for spinal tumor surgery created by 3D printing	
	Meta analysis of the efficacy and safety of early and delayed laparoscopic surgery in acute cholecystitis	
	Effects of multidisciplinary collaborative continuing care on treatment compliance and quality of life of patients undergoing minimally invasive surgery for hypertensive intracerebral hemorrhage	
Przestrzeń Społeczna	Analysis of Determinants Influencing the Demand for Cold Supply Chain in China's Fresh Farm Produce Sector	
	Illegal Firearms Data Administration: Administrative Procedures and Legal Framework for Tracing Illegal Firearms in Thailand	
	Synergizing Nanjing's Visual Advertising Governance: An Integrated Approach Fusing Historical Processes and Ergonomic Visual Characteristic Framework	

## Discussion and conclusions

This analysis uncovers evidence of concerning publishing practices in a group of journals acquired in recent years by Oxbridge Publishing House or associated entities. While not all journals exhibit every issue, the key problematic practices identified through documentary and quantitative analysis include:

- **Opaque governance of new publishers:** A network of companies, seemingly controlled by the same individuals, obscures accountability and creates confusion regarding journal oversight. The relationship between this network, and other entities involved in the acquisition of journals, such as Open Access Text, and JCFCorp, remains unclear.
- **Content appropriation:** Oxbridge and its network are using website content from publishers such as Transnational Press London, the Royal Society of Chemistry, and BioMed Central. This practice raises concerns about Oxbridge's ethical standards.
- **Lack of transparency about publisher changes:** Journal websites and critical bibliographic sources (e.g., ISSN Portal, Crossref metadata) frequently fail to provide updated information about the acquisition of journals in our analysis by new publishers. However, an exception to this pattern is the journal *Comunicar*, which is consistently and transparently associated with Oxbridge Publishing House across most platforms. This demonstrates that transparency is achievable and underscores that not all journals under these publishers follow a uniform approach. Another indication of a lack of transparency is the failure to update editorial roles, sometimes long after researchers announce their decision to step down, or even after they have passed away.
- **Mismanagement of DOIs:** Practices include the widespread use and dissemination of fake DOIs, the misappropriation of existing DOIs, and, at best, a decline in the quality of deposited metadata—such as the omission of cited references that were routinely included prior to the publisher transition. Whether due to ignorance, disregard for best practices, or an intentional attempt to mislead readers, this improper use of DOIs undermines the credibility and traceability of research, thereby hindering the creation of an interconnected scholarly record.
- **Drastic increase in publication fees:** Almost half of the journals in our analysis did not charge publication fees prior to the publisher transition but introduced them afterward. Among the journals that already imposed fees, most experienced a significant increase in these charges.
- **Drastic increase in article production:** Many journals experience a sudden influx of submissions from regions outside their traditional research communities, leading to drastic publication increases. Examples include *Kurdish Studies*, *Archives of Clinical Psychiatry*, *Przestrzeń Społeczna*,

*Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica, Review of International Geographical Education Online, Revista de Psicología del Deporte, Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte, and Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy.*

- **Publication of documents outside the scope of the journals:** Circumstantial evidence reveals flagrant discrepancies between the original focus of the journals and the topics of the articles published after the publisher transition.

The practices outlined above, combined with the systematic introduction or escalation of publication fees, strongly suggest that the primary motive behind acquiring these journals is profit generation, often at the expense of publishing standards.

Lacking a prior term to describe this specific phenomenon, we refer to these journals as “pod journals”, drawing on the concept of “pod people” (“Pod People (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*),” 2024). Just as pod people are superficially similar to their original selves and stealthily replace them, these journals often undergo an opaque transition from one publisher to another. Then, despite maintaining their outward appearance and continuing to publish, their practices are fundamentally altered.

It can be argued that, for at least some of these journals, their original mission of fostering academic discourse is lost after the transition, replaced by profit-driven motives and characterised by a decline in publishing standards. Issues such as the use of fake DOIs, lack of clear communication, erratic changes in editorial positions, and the acceptance of articles outside the journal’s scope exemplify this shift. Like pod people, these journals exist in a form that appears familiar but no longer serves its original purpose.

While this phenomenon could be confused with that of hijacked journals, they differ in at least one key aspect. While hijacked journals typically involve the unauthorized takeover of an existing journal by malicious actors aiming to exploit its reputation for profit (Abalkina, 2023), pod journals are acquired by questionable publishers in a manner that appears legal, even if it eventually results in a fundamental shift in the journal’s mission and practices.

Therefore, compared to hijacked journals, the long-term effects of the “podification” of a journal—such as declining publishing standards and the introduction of unethical practices—could be more damaging, as the essence of the original journal is lost in the process, potentially disenfranchising its original community of researchers. Furthermore, because publishers engaging in podification primarily seem to target independent journals or those managed by small publishers, this practice could pose a significant threat to scholarly bibliodiversity.

So far, it appears that exclusive bibliographic databases such as Web of Science and Scopus have only been partially successful in identifying and de-listing journals caught in this predicament. However, many of these de-listings occurred in 2024, suggesting that these databases are currently aware of the issue and may be analysing other cases. Web of Science appears to be more responsive, having stopped coverage for 11 out of the 17 journals in our analysis that were previously indexed, while Scopus has officially discontinued 8 of the 36 journals, and does not provide 2024 coverage for an additional six journals. The response of other journal evaluation tools, which continue to include these journals—occasionally ranking them in top positions—remains to be seen.

It is also important to note that Scopus appears to have de-indexed a significant number of documents from these journals which were at some point included in the database. While we understand that, to take this action, Scopus must have identified concerns with these documents or the journals that published them, we believe that de-indexing records in a scholarly bibliographic database—that is, not maintaining document coverage stability in a source that is commonly used as a surrogate for scholarly registries (e.g., literature searches, evaluation exercises, bibliometric analyses)—undermines the capacity of the platform to carry out reproducible analyses. This is particularly problematic when the removal of records occurs silently, leaving no public trace of the action, which can hinder the results of studies such as this one.

Additionally, both Scopus and Web of Science appear to have ingested large quantities of fake and misappropriated DOIs used by these publishers. Bibliographic databases should address this potential threat by implementing proactive approaches to identifying and removing fake DOIs, as well as implementing stricter validation mechanisms to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

This study does not systematically analyze several relevant aspects of the phenomenon, such as the extent of discrepancies between journals' scopes, and the topics of articles published in them after their publisher transition. Further studies will analyze this aspect systematically, including whether documents published in these journals can be linked to paper mills, as suggested by Smut Clyde (2023), and other potential unethical practices related to content, such as citation trafficking (Singh Chawla, 2024).

More broadly, this phenomenon raises significant concerns about the overall state of scholarly communication, with particular emphasis on the challenges faced by independent and small journals. In an environment where the demand from authors to publish continues to grow, and where commercial companies race to meet this demand (Hanson et al., 2024), the proliferation of pod journals illustrates how easily bad actors can infiltrate and undermine the integrity of the scholarly record. It is alarming that these operations can persist for extended

periods within the communities surrounding the journals they acquire, with many members remaining unaware and others choosing to stay silent.

Furthermore, this issue brings attention to the ongoing challenge of limited resources that many small journals face daily, even those that achieve success and gain recognition within their communities. These endemic vulnerabilities make such journals attractive targets for predatory entities, and it is unsurprising that some fall victim to these practices—particularly during critical transitions, such as when their administrators seek to reduce their workload or step down from their responsibilities. The prospect of economic compensation after years of managing a journal, often with little recognition, likely adds to the appeal.

While perhaps understandable—and, to the best of our knowledge, entirely legal—the decision to transfer established journals to publishers that engage in questionable practices is undeniably detrimental to the academic community, as we have observed. This practice has the potential to destroy communicative spaces that are difficult to replicate and, in doing so, poses a threat to academic bibliodiversity.

At a time when Diamond Open Access journals and scholar-led initiatives are gaining momentum and support in some parts of the world (Dutch Research Council, 2024; Mounier & Rooryck, 2024), the phenomenon of pod journals represents a troubling counterpoint.

Research and policy institutions should be aware of this threat and take proactive steps to protect the integrity of scholarly communication (Abalkina et al., 2025). This includes increasing support for independent and small journals, promoting transparency in publishing practices, and ensuring the sustainability of scholar-led initiatives. By recognizing and addressing these emerging challenges, institutions can help safeguard the future of academic publishing and prevent the erosion of trust in the scholarly record.

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank David Bimler (aka Smut Clyde) for providing comments on an early version of the manuscript. We thank Master's student Ismael Ahmed Khaldi Carles for his collaboration in identifying changes in APCs across the journals, a project in which he participated while holding a research collaboration grant funded by the Spanish Ministry of Education. We would also like to acknowledge undergraduate student Vanessa Lorente Berlanga for her assistance in identifying fake DOIs as part of a research initiation grant funded by the University of Granada. This study has not received any additional funding. ChatGPT was used to refine and enhance the English language writing of this document.



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## Appendix 1

Distribution of publisher in the 36 journals, according to Crossref metadata, across Crossref public data files from 2020-2024, and Crossref API data on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2025.

⬆️ N<sup>o</sup> of records in a given Crossref public data file / API retrieval, which were not retrieved in the previous Crossref public data file

⬇️ N<sup>o</sup> of records not retrieved in a given Crossref public data file / API retrieval, which were retrieved in the previous Crossref public data file

**Total:** N<sup>o</sup> of records retrieved in a given Crossref public data file / API retrieval

AgBioForum (no DOI records in Crossref)

American Journal of Health Behavior																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
⬆️	⬇️	Total	⬆️	⬇️	Total	⬆️	⬇️	Total	⬆️	⬇️	Total	⬆️	⬇️	Total	⬆️	⬇️	Total
71	0	1567	66	0	1633	79	0	1712	81	0	1793	133	0	1926	99	0	2025
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
PNG Publications		1567	PNG Publications		1633	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		1712	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		1793	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		1926	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		2025

<b>Artseduca</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
27	0	61	18	1	78	92	0	170	64	0	234	23	0	257	0	0	257
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Universitat Jaume I		61	Universitat Jaume I		78	Universitat Jaume I		170	Universitat Jaume I		234	Universitat Jaume I		257	Universitat Jaume I		257

<b>Central Asia and the Caucasus</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
15	0	15	55	0	70	58	0	128	0	0	128	0	0	128	1	0	129
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
CA and C Press AB		15	CA and C Press AB		70	CA and C Press AB		128	CA and C Press AB		128	CA and C Press AB		128	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		128
															Ninety Nine Publication		1

<b>Comunicar</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
81	20	1540	40	0	1580	40	0	1620	40	0	1660	60	0	1720	10	0	1730
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Grupo Comunicar		1540	Grupo Comunicar		1580	Grupo Comunicar		1620	Grupo Comunicar		1660	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		1720	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		1730

<b>Croatian International Relations Review</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
7	0	91	12	0	103	0	0	103	0	0	103	0	0	103	0	0	103
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Walter de Gruyter GmbH		91	Walter de Gruyter GmbH		52	Walter de Gruyter GmbH		52	Walter de Gruyter GmbH		52	Walter de Gruyter GmbH		52	Walter de Gruyter GmbH		52
			Institute for Development and International Relations		51	Institute for Development and International Relations		51	Institute for Development and International Relations		51	Institute for Development and International Relations		51	Institute for Development and International Relations		51

<b>Cuadernos de Economía</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
10	0	251	10	0	261	8	0	269	0	72	197	0	0	197	0	0	197
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Cuadernos de Economía		251	Cuadernos de Economía		261	Cuadernos de Economía		269	Cuadernos de Economía		197	Cuadernos de Economía		193	Cuadernos de Economía		175
												Asociación Cuadernos de Economía		4	Asociación Cuadernos de Economía		22

<b>Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
19	0	112	18	0	130	24	0	154	0	0	154	0	0	154	0	0	154
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics		112	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics		130	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics		154	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics		154	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics		154	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics		154

<b>Eurasian Journal of Educational Research</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
40	0	424	78	0	502	106	0	608	0	0	608	0	0	608	0	0	608
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Ani Publishing and Consulting Company		424	Ani Publishing and Consulting Company		502	Ani Publishing and Consulting Company		608	Ani Publishing and Consulting Company		608	Ani Publishing and Consulting Company		608	Ani Publishing and Consulting Company		608

<b>Fonseca Journal of Communication</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
19	0	117	20	0	137	37	0	174	34	0	208	19	0	227	0	0	227
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca		117	Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca		137	Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca		174	Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca		208	Institute for Advanced Studies		227	Institute for Advanced Studies		227

<b>HIV Nursing</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
						SynthesisHub		3	SynthesisHub		3	SynthesisHub		3	SynthesisHub		3
						Advance			Advance			Advance			Advance		
						Scientific			Scientific			Scientific			Scientific		
						Research			Research			Research			Research		

International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences (no DOIs in Crossref)

International Journal of Cyber Criminology (no DOIs on Crossref)

International Journal of Instructional Cases (no DOIs in Crossref)

<b>International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
0	0	0	8	0	8	34	0	42	0	0	42	0	0	42	0	0	42
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
			International Forum of Management Scholars		8	International Forum of Management Scholars		42	International Forum of Management Scholars		42	International Forum of Management Scholars		42	International Forum of Management Scholars		42

<b>Jornal Brasileiro de Patologia e Medicina Laboratorial</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
68	2	1228	45	0	1273	50	0	1323	0	0	1323	2	0	1325	0	0	1325
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		819	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		819	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		819	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		819	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		821	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		821
GN1 Genesis Network		409	GN1 Genesis Network		454	GN1 Genesis Network		483	GN1 Genesis Network		483	GN1 Genesis Network		482	GN1 Genesis Network		480
						GN1 Sistemas e Publicacoes Ltd.		21	GN1 Sistemas e Publicacoes Ltd.		21	GN1 Sistemas e Publicacoes Ltd.		22	GN1 Sistemas e Publicacoes Ltd.		24

<b>Journal of Carcinogenesis</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
11	0	250	11	0	261	22	0	283	0	0	283	0	0	283	0	0	283
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Medknow		250	Medknow		261	Medknow		283	Medknow		283	Medknow		283			

<b>Journal of Commercial Biotechnology</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
47	6	1190	18	0	1208	45	0	1253	157	0	1410	6	0	1416	0	0	1416
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
thinkBiotech, LLC		1190	thinkBiotech, LLC		1208	thinkBiotech, LLC		1253	thinkBiotech, LLC		1410	thinkBiotech, LLC		1416	thinkBiotech, LLC		1416

**Journal of Fish Taxonomy (no DOIs in Crossref)**

**Journal of Modern Project Management (no DOIs in Crossref)**

<b>Journal of Natural Science, Biology and Medicine</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
15	0	675	0	0	675	50	0	725	0	0	725	0	0	725	0	0	725
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Medknow		675	Medknow		675	EManuscript Technologies		725	EManuscript Technologies		725	EManuscript Technologies		725	MANUSCRIPT TECHNOLOGIES A LLP		725

<b>Kurdish Studies</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
5	0	90	20	0	110	19	0	129	6	0	135	0	0	135	0	0	135
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Transnational Press London		90	Transnational Press London		110	Transnational Press London		129	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		135	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		135	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		135

<b>PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
			PalArch Foundation		1	PalArch Foundation		2	PalArch Foundation		2	PalArch Foundation		2	PalArch Foundation		2



<b>Profesional de la Informacion</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
129	11	1873	167	0	2040	164	0	2204	124	0	2328	125	1	2452	98	0	2550
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Ediciones Profesionales de la Informacion SL		1873	Ediciones Profesionales de la Informacion SL		2040	Ediciones Profesionales de la Informacion SL		2204	Ediciones Profesionales de la Informacion SL		2328	Ediciones Profesionales de la Informacion SL		2452	Ediciones Profesionales de la Informacion SL		2550

**Przestrzen Społeczna (no DOIs in Crossref)**

<b>Remittances Review</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
5	0	41	6	0	47	8	0	55	43	0	98	0	0	98	0	0	98
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Transnational Press London		41	Transnational Press London		47	Transnational Press London		55	Centivens Institute of Innovative Research		98	Centivens Institute of Innovative Research		98	Centivens Institute of Innovative Research		98

<b>Review of Diabetic Studies</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
8	2	368	2	0	370	22	1	391	14	0	405	6	0	411	0	0	411
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Society for Biomedical Diabetes Research (SBDR)		361	Society for Biomedical Diabetes Research (SBDR)		310	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		384	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		398	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		404	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		404
Test accounts		7	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		53	Test accounts		7	Test accounts		7	Test accounts		7	Test accounts		7
			Test accounts		7												

<b>Review of International Geographical Education Online</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
32	0	52	30	0	82	48	0	130	0	0	130	0	0	130	0	0	130
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Review of International Geographical Education Online		52	Review of International Geographical Education Online		82	Institute for Advanced Studies		130	Institute for Advanced Studies		130	Institute for Advanced Studies		130	Institute for Advanced Studies		130

<b>Revista Argentina de Clinica Psicologica</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
410	5	560	5	0	565	0	5	560	0	0	560	5	0	565	0	0	565
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Raffles Connect Pte Ltd		558	Raffles Connect Pte Ltd		564	Raffles Connect Pte Ltd		560	Raffles Connect Pte Ltd		560	Raffles Connect Pte Ltd		565	Raffles Connect Pte Ltd		565
Fundacion Aigle		2	Fundacion Aigle		1												

<b>Revista de Psicologia del Deporte (no DOIs in Crossref)</b>
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<b>Revista de Psiquiatria Clinica</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
37	0	823	19	0	842	24	0	866	0	0	866	0	0	866	0	0	866
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		823	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		842	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		842	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		842	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		842	FapUNIFESP (SciELO)		842
						Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd.		24	Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd.		24	Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd.		24	Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd.		24

<b>Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
39	0	269	38	0	307	72	1	378	50	0	428	1	0	429	0	0	429
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autonoma de Madrid		269	Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autonoma de Madrid		307	Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autonoma de Madrid		378	Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autonoma de Madrid		428	Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autonoma de Madrid		429	Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autonoma de Madrid		429

<b>Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
2	0	127	217	0	344	0	0	344	0	0	344	0	0	344	0	0	344
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
SynthesisHub Advance Scientific Research		127	SynthesisHub Advance Scientific Research		344	SynthesisHub Advance Scientific Research		344	SynthesisHub Advance Scientific Research		344	SynthesisHub Advance Scientific Research		344	SynthesisHub Advance Scientific Research		344

<b>Tobacco Regulatory Science</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
28	2	234	29	0	263	627	1	889	0	0	889	1	0	890	0	0	890
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Tobacco Regulatory Science Group		234	Tobacco Regulatory Science Group		263	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		889	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		889	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		838	JCFCorp SG PTE LTD		838
												Auricle Technologies, Pvt., Ltd.		52	Auricle Technologies, Pvt., Ltd.		52

<b>Transnational Marketing Journal</b>																	
2020 Crossref data file			2021 Crossref data file			2022 Crossref data file			2023 Crossref data file			2024 Crossref data file			2025-01 API retrieval		
↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
9	0	67	16	0	83	56	0	139	11	0	150	0	0	150	0	0	150
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Transnational Press London		67	Transnational Press London		83	Transnational Press London		139	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		150	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		150	Oxbridgepublishinghouse		150

### Vascular and Endovascular Review

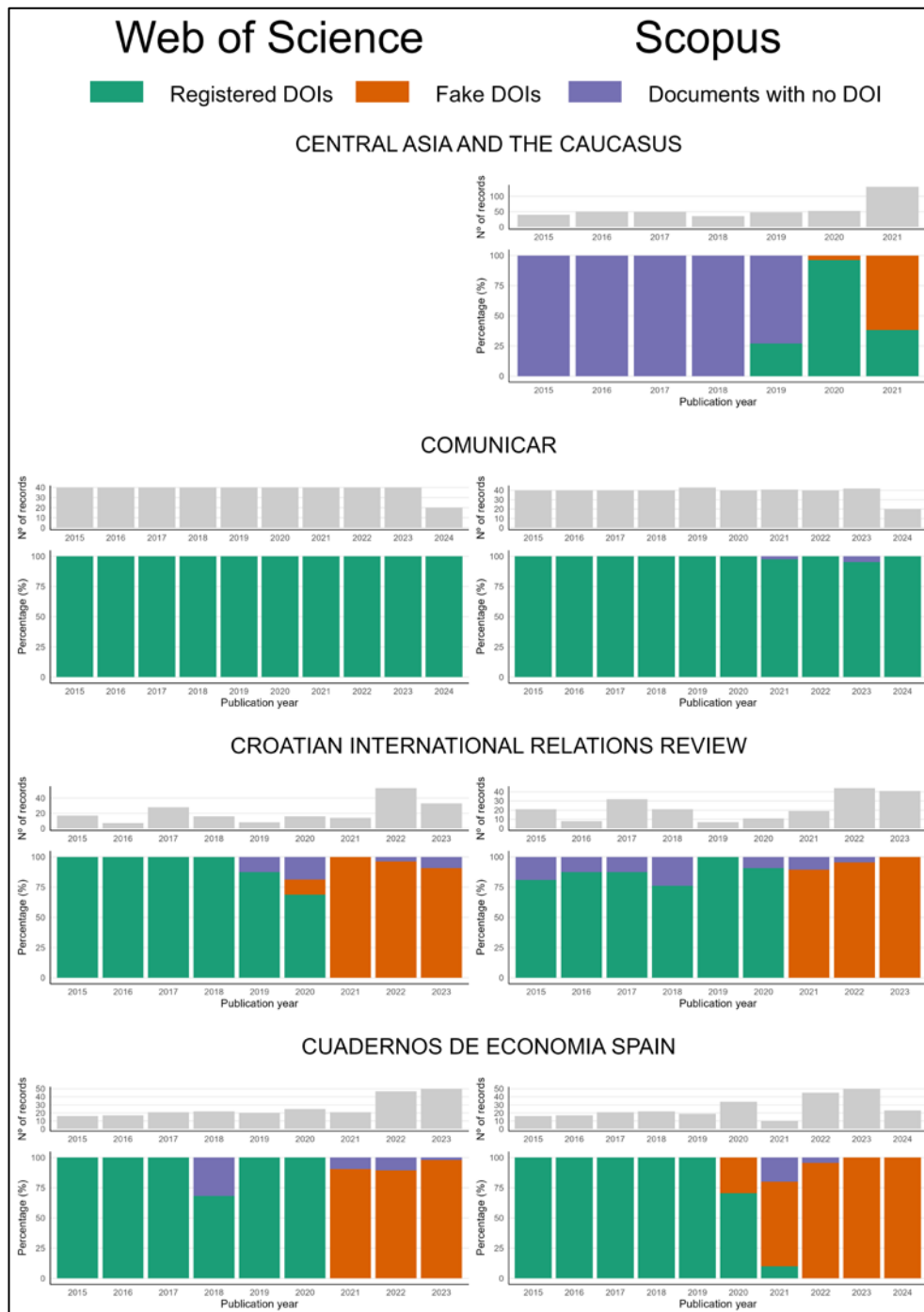
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↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total	↑	↓	Total
5	0	27	14	0	41	10	0	51	10	0	61	4	0	65	0	0	65
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N	Publisher		N
Radcliffe Group Ltd		27	Radcliffe Group Ltd		41	Radcliffe Group Ltd		46	Radcliffe Group Ltd		41	Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd.		65	Open Access Text Pvt, Ltd.		65
						Radcliffe Media Media Ltd		5	Radcliffe Media Media Ltd		20						

## Appendix 2

Distribution of registered and fake DOIs propagated by the journals under analysis to Web of Science and Scopus, by journal

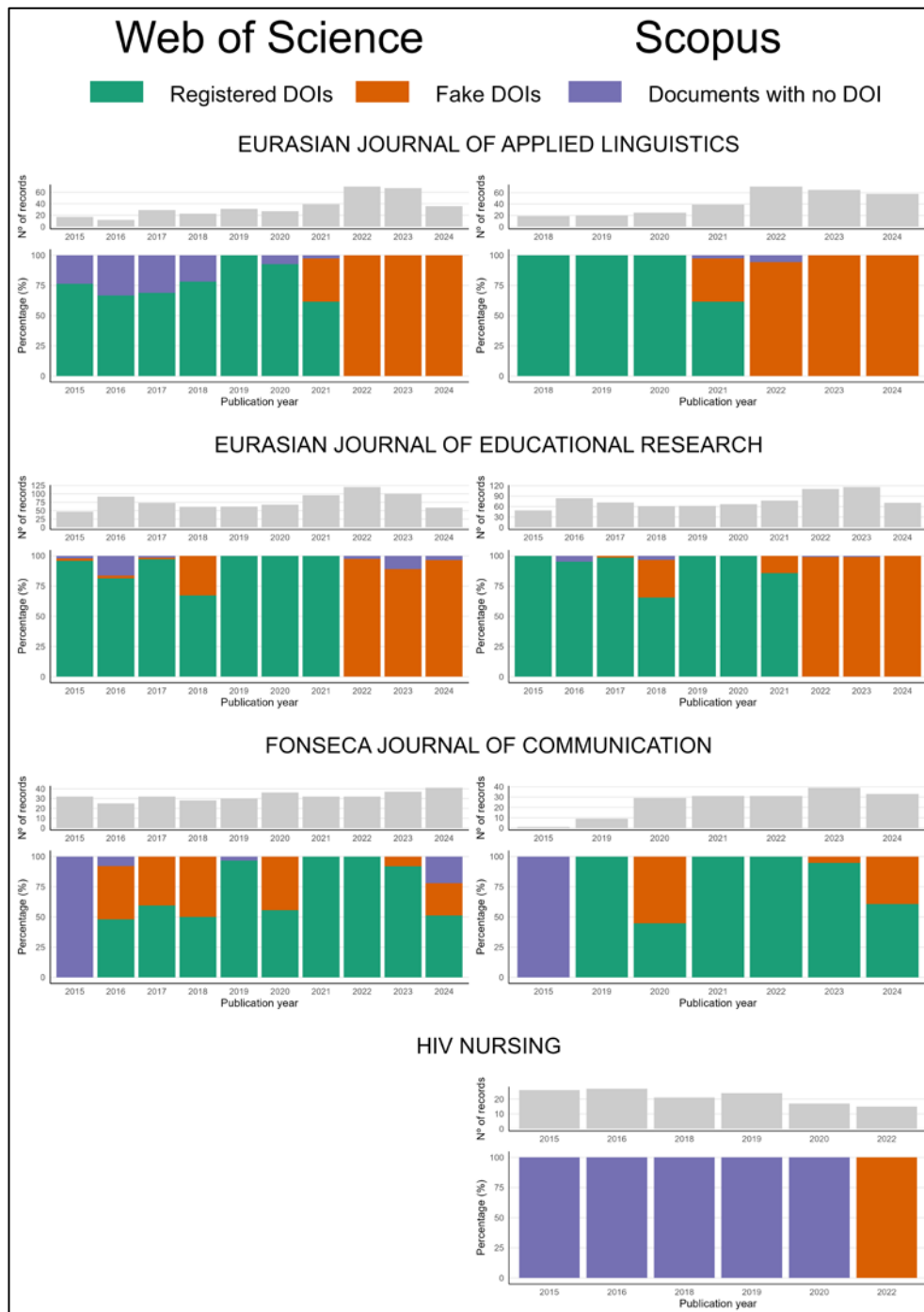


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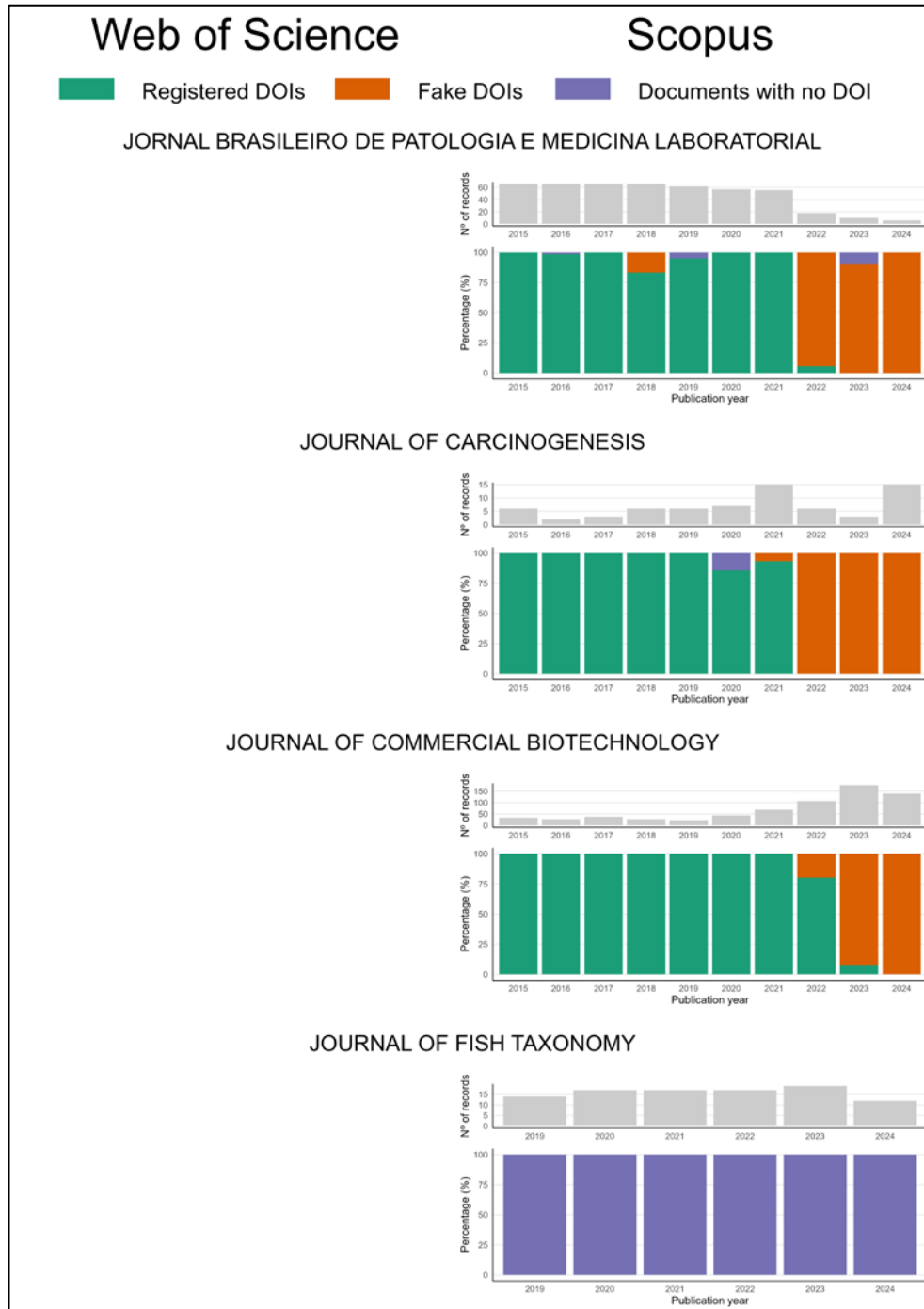
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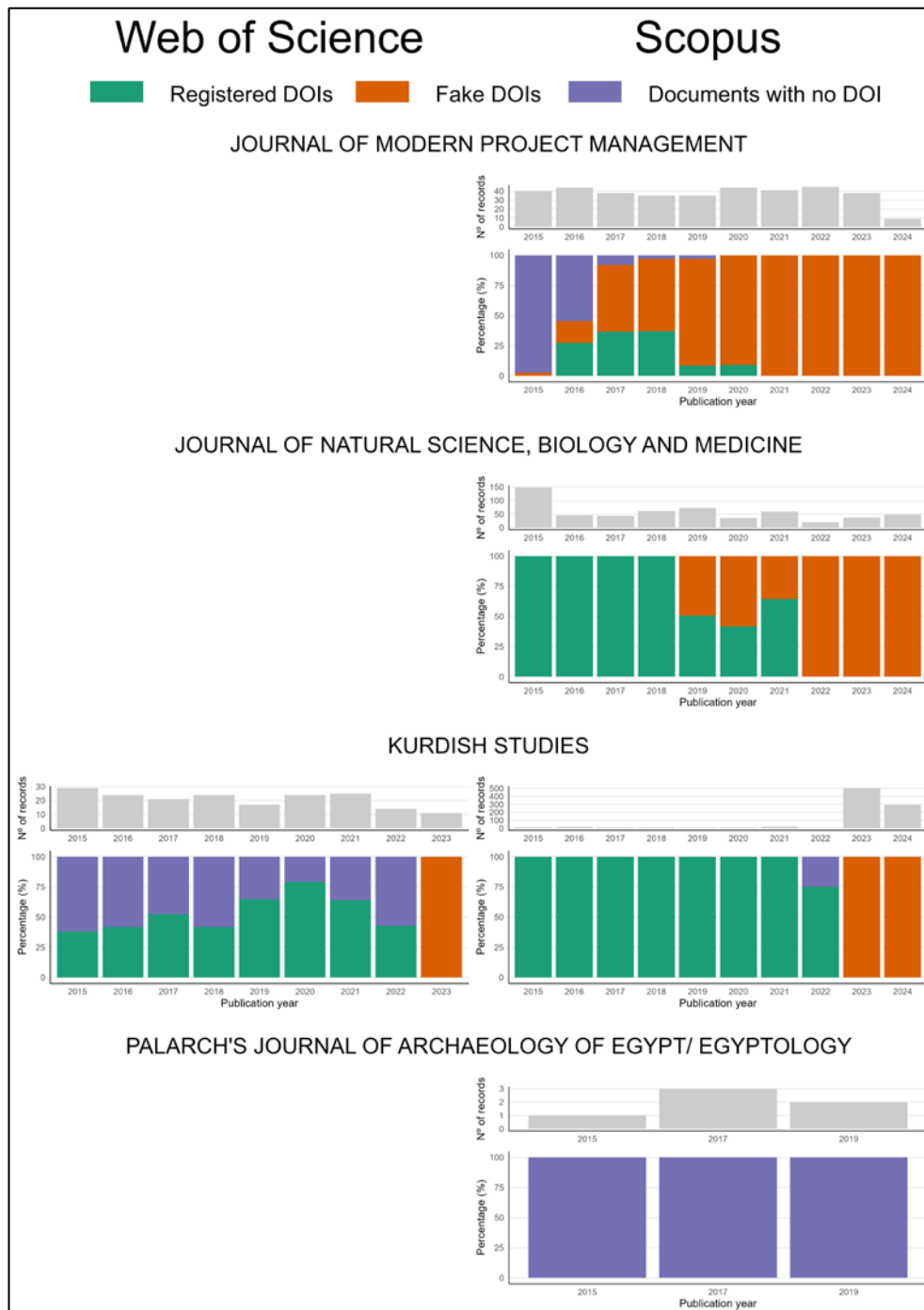
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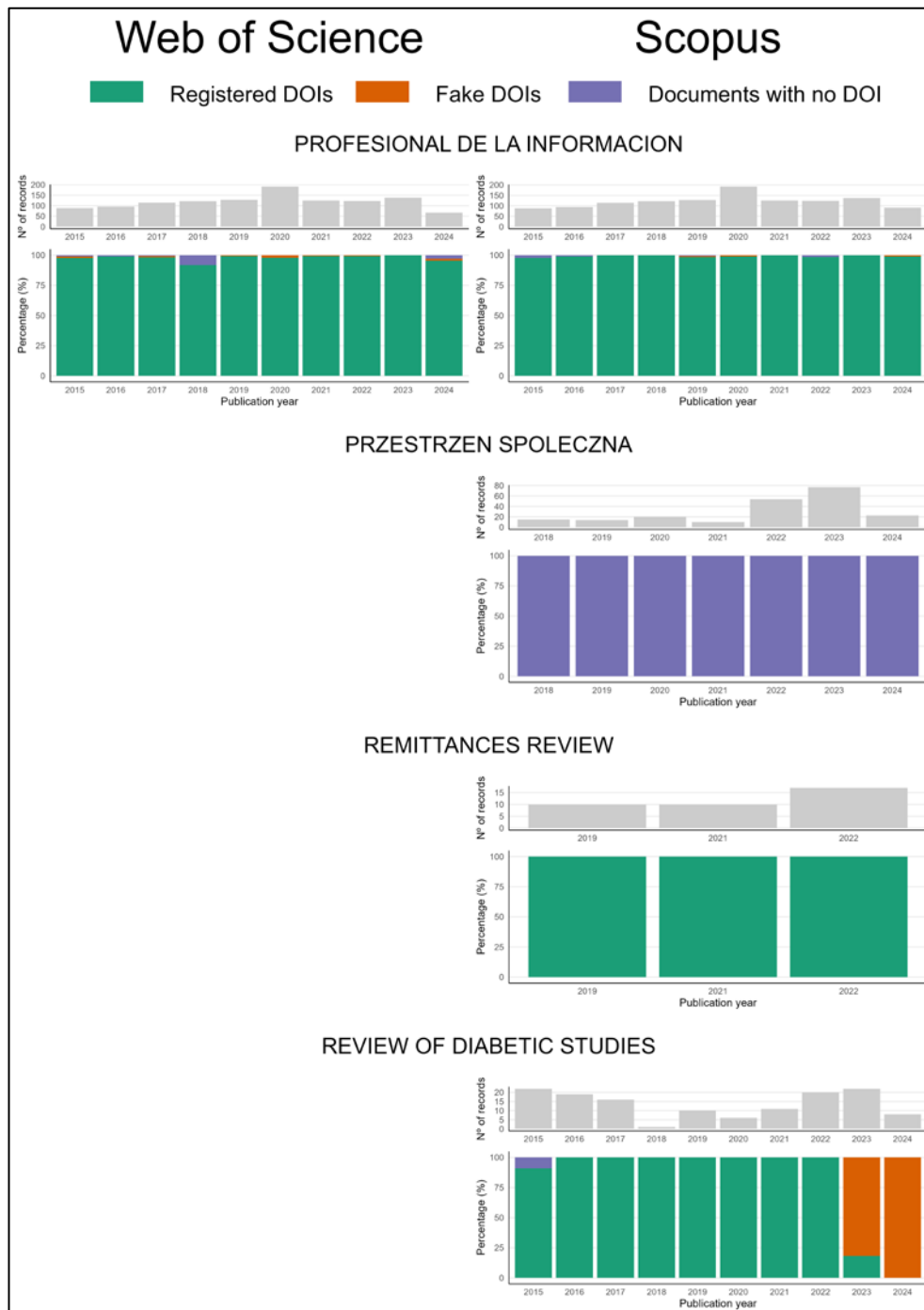
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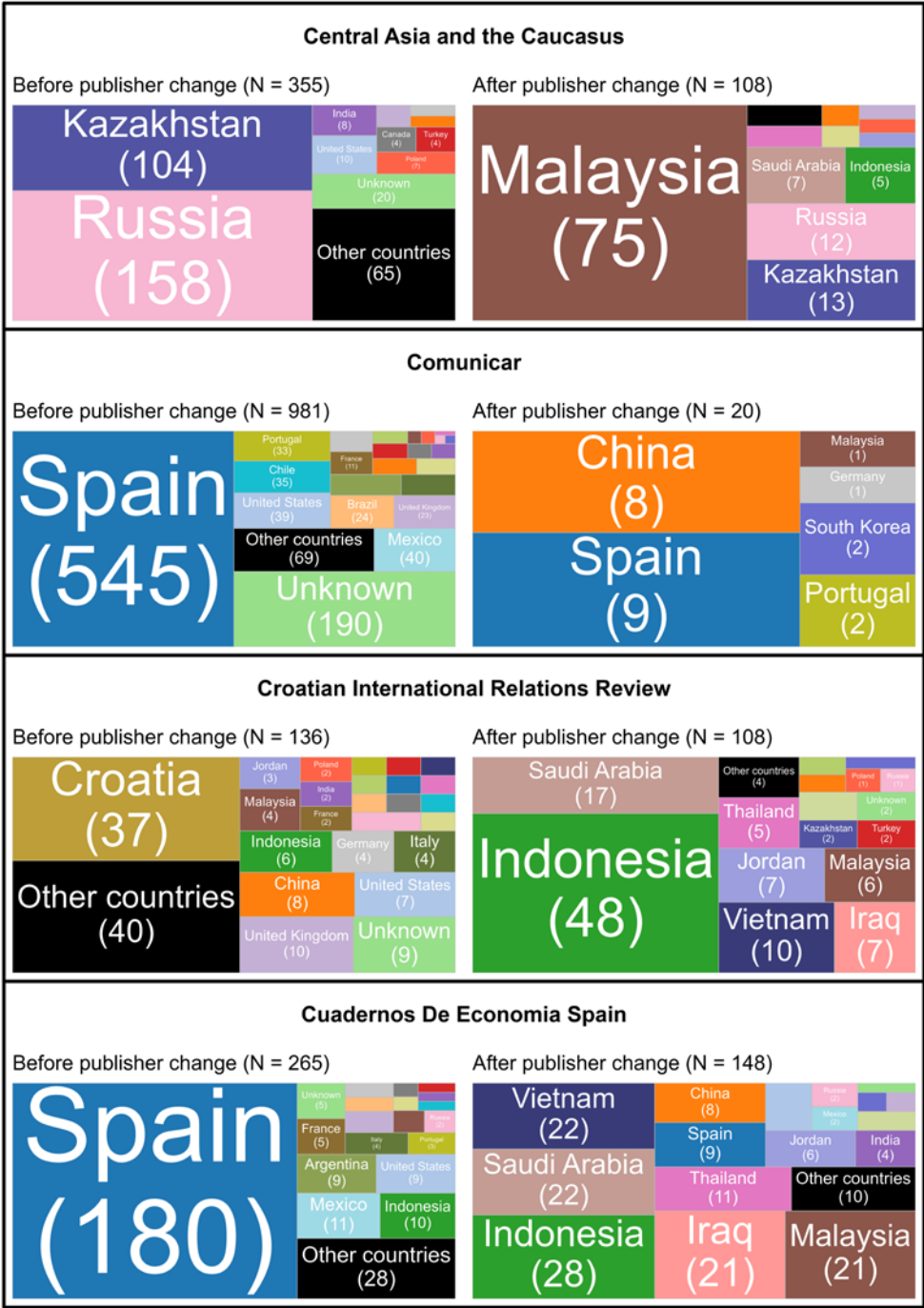


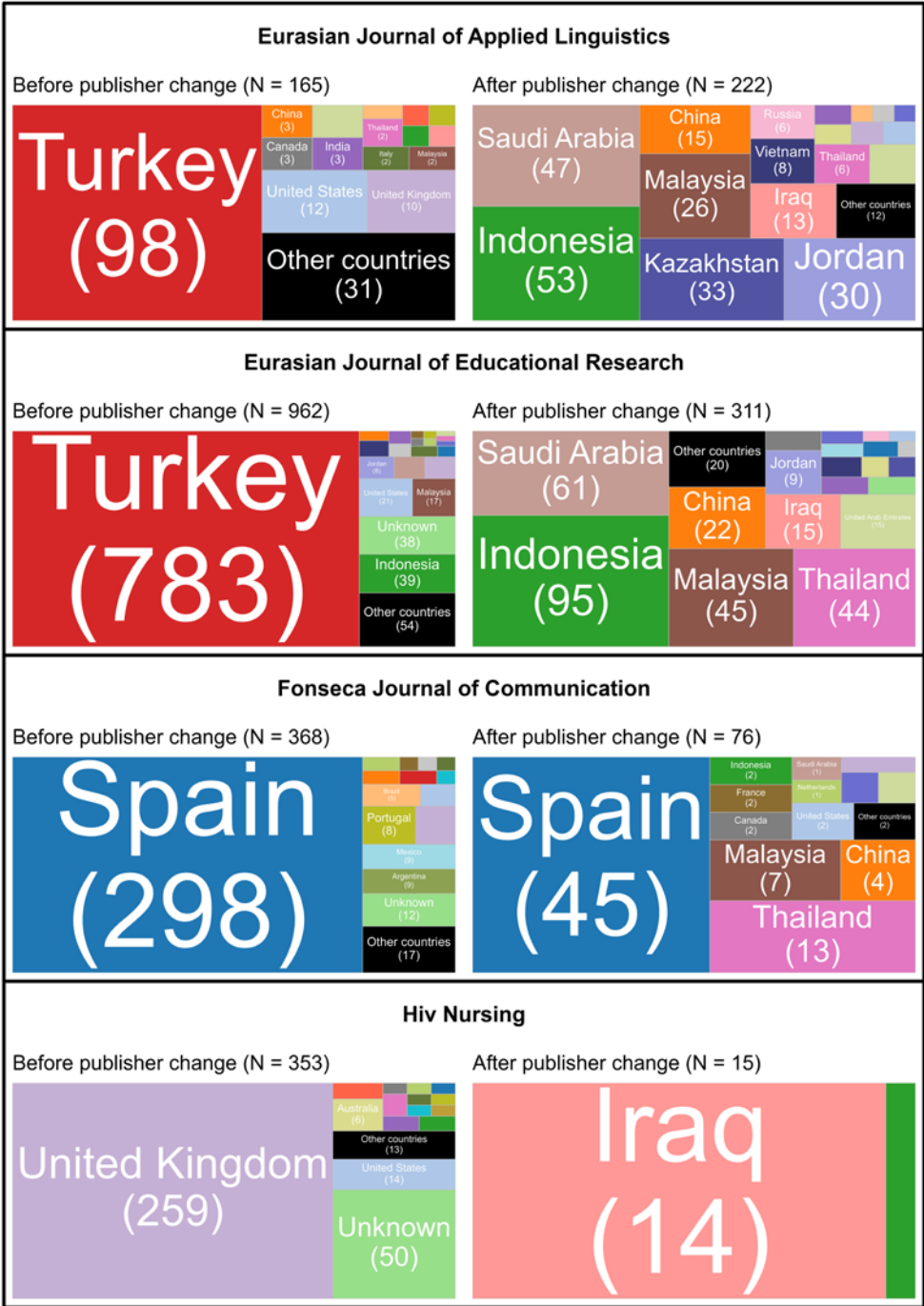
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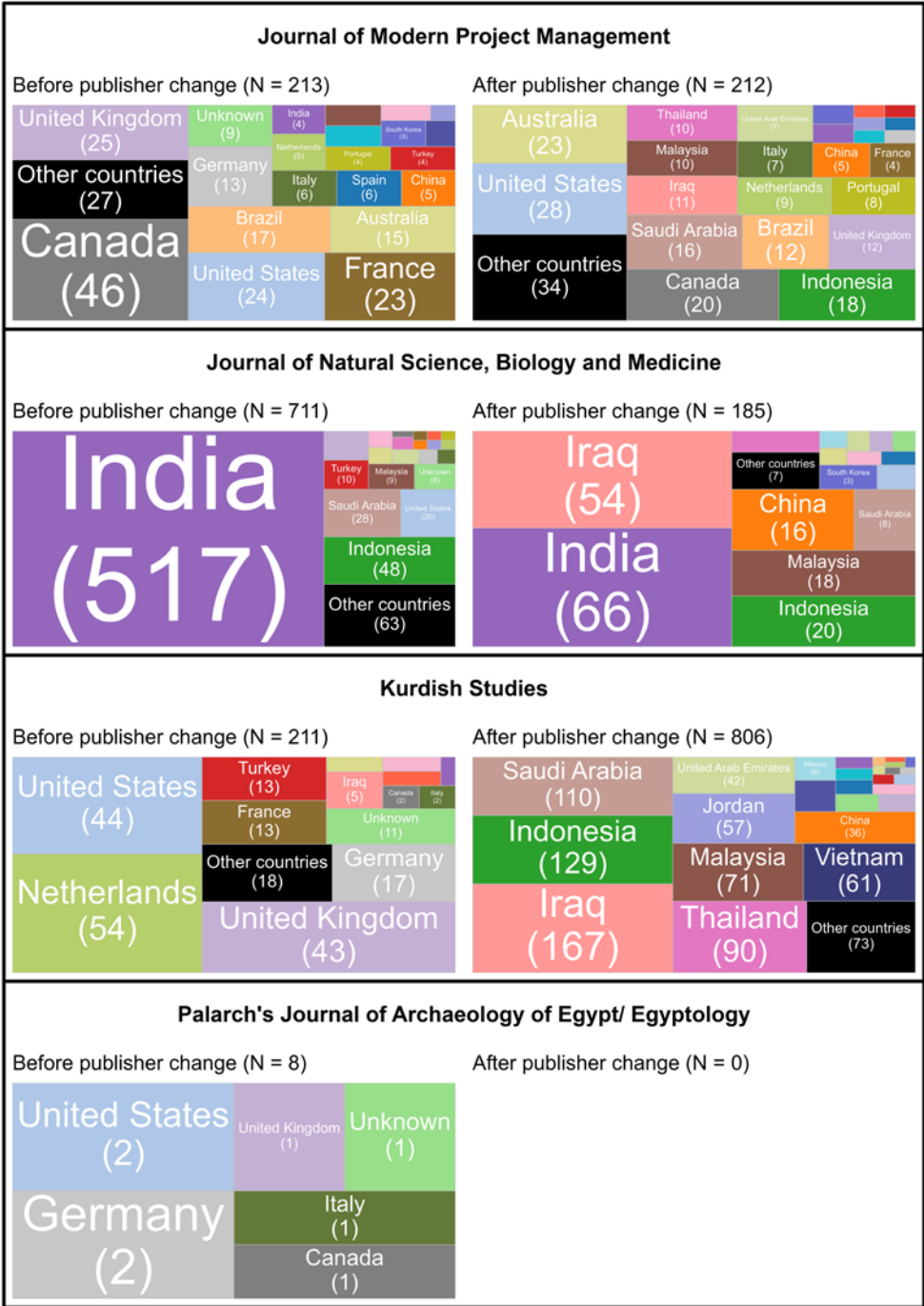


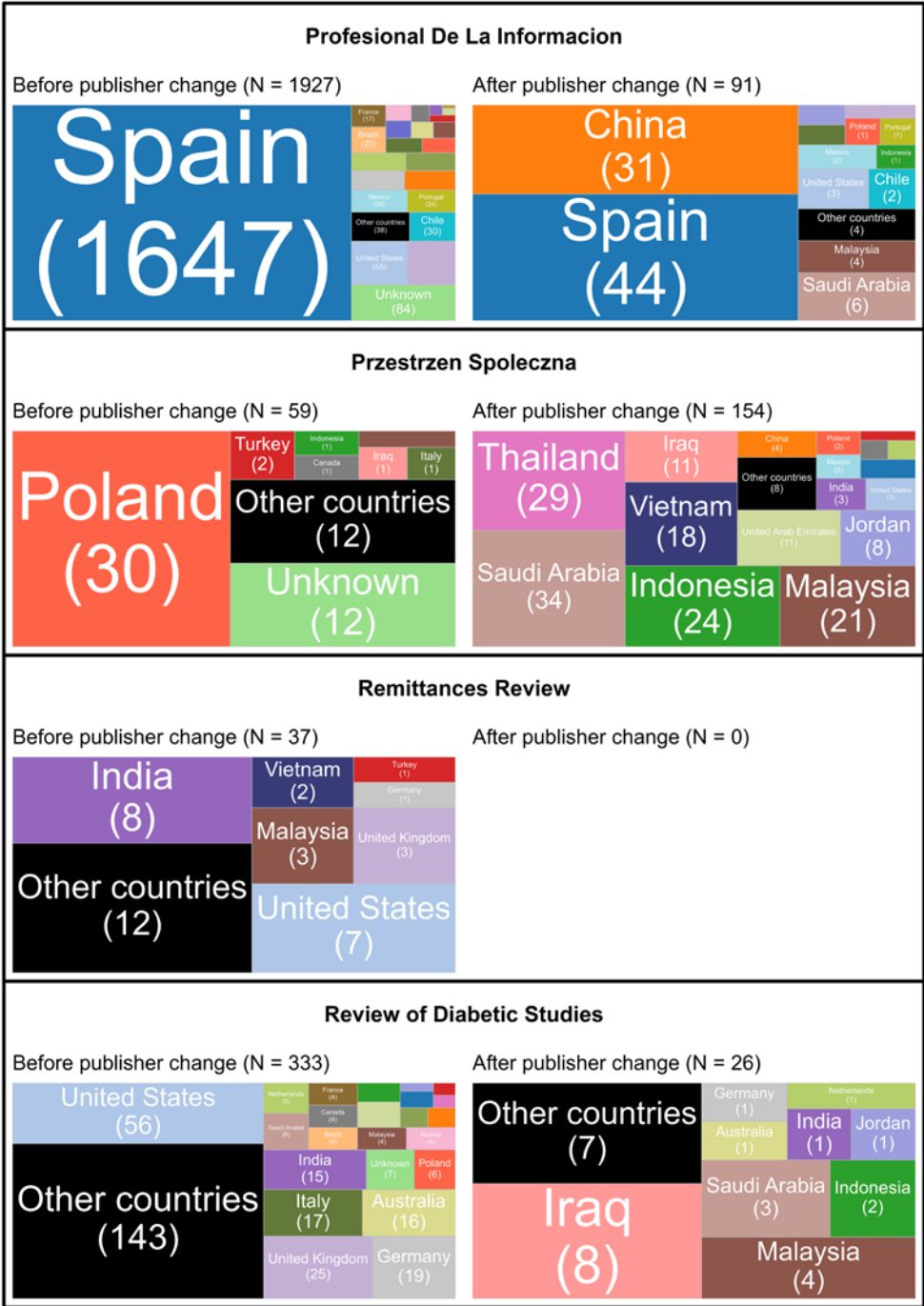














### Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy

Before publisher change (N = 104)



After publisher change (N = 1794)



### Tobacco Regulatory Science

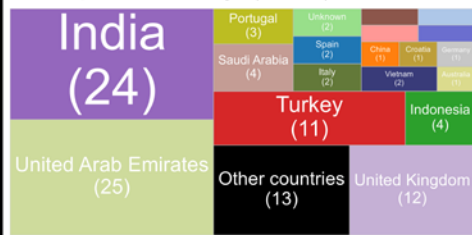
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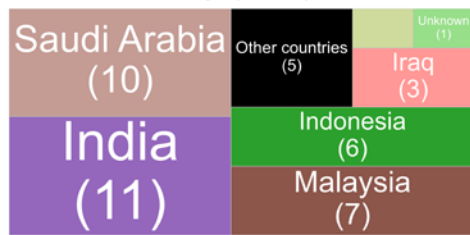
After publisher change (N = 0)

### Transnational Marketing Journal

Before publisher change (N = 97)

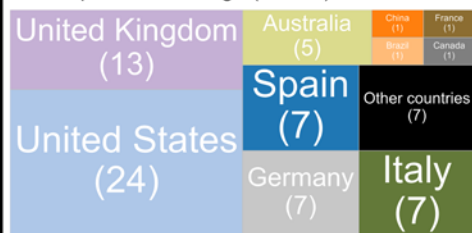


After publisher change (N = 41)



### Vascular and Endovascular Review

Before publisher change (N = 60)



After publisher change (N = 15)

