



Questionable practices in the evolving publishing landscape

Gustaf Nelhans

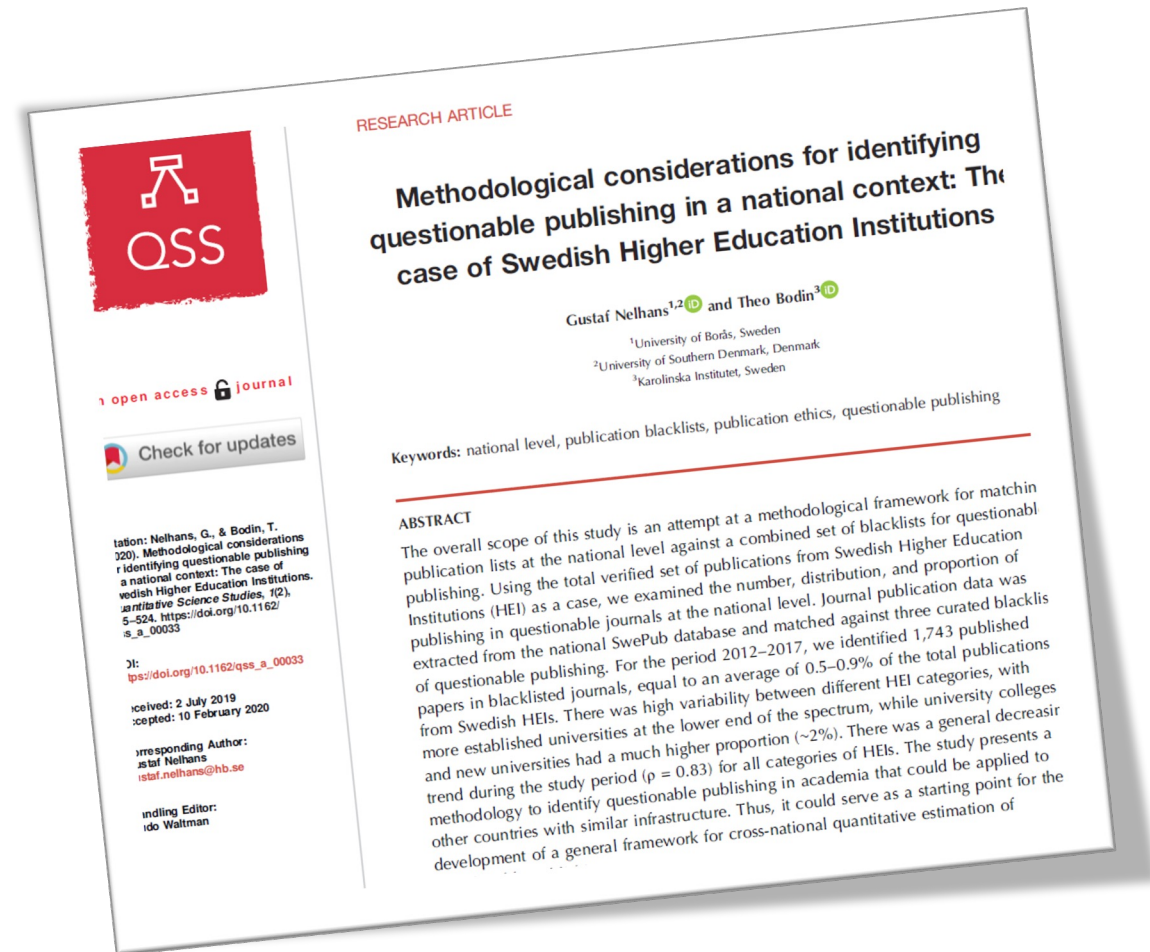
In research we trust – navigating complexity in the PhD journey

Doktorandernas förkonferens: SWERA 2022

2022-10-04

Overview

1. Open access in context.
2. 'Questionable publishing' (*predatory publ.*)
Sv. "**Tvivelaktig publicering**"
3. Study the proportion of questionable publishing in Sweden – published in *Quantitative Science Studies*
 - (with Theo Bodin, Karolinska Institutet)



https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00033

What the [@\$∞!] is a scholarly publication?

journals scientific norms format – distinct headings

“The scholarly publication”
By: Author NN

origi

Get me off Your Fucking Mailing List

David Mazières and Eddie Kohler
New York University
University of California, Los Angeles

fic language

Abstract

Get me off your fucking ma
your fucking mailing list. G
ing mailing list. Get me of
ing list. Get me off your f

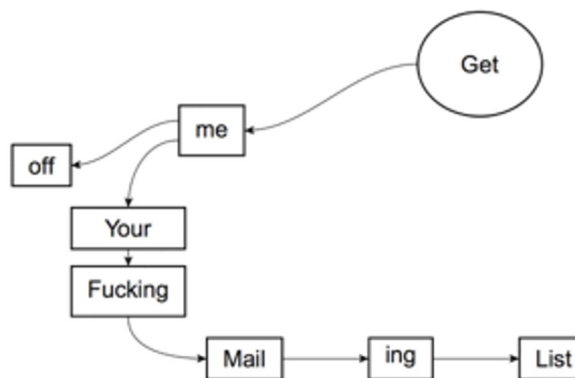


Figure 1: Get me off your fucking mailing list.

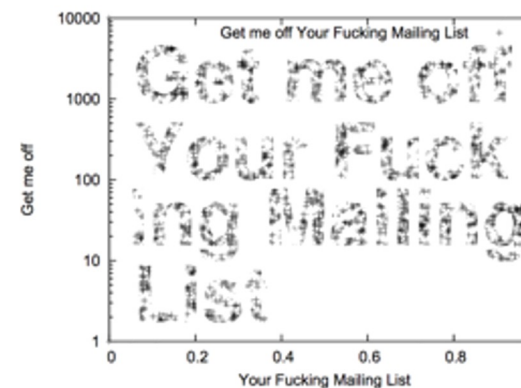
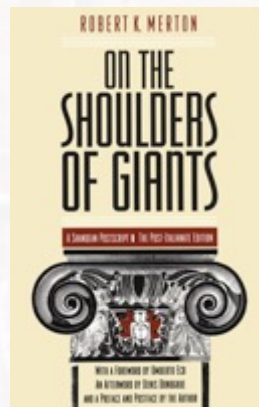


Figure 2: Get me off your fucking mailing list.

Merton's norm system of science

- Communalism
- Universalism
- Disinterestedness
- Organized Scepticism



Merton, R. K. 1973 (1942). The Normative Structure of Science. In *The sociology of science: theoretical and empirical investigations*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 267-278.

CUDOS vs. PLACE

- 
- **C**ommunalism
 - **U**niversalism
 - **D**isinterestedness
 - **(O**riginality)/
 - **O**rganized
 - **S**cepticism
-
- **P**roprietary
 - **L**ocal
 - **A**uthoritarian
 - **C**ommissioned
 - **E**xpert

Ziman, J. (1984). *An Introduction to science studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mitroff, I (1974). Norms and Counter-Norms in a Select Group of the Apollo Moon Scientists:
A Case Study of the Ambivalence of Scientists. *American Sociological Review* 39, 570-595

Peer review

- The main component of ***Organized scepticism***
- The manuscript is evaluated by "***peers***", colleagues, that are specialists on the same subject
- The primary tool for guaranteeing ***quality*** in scholarly publishing
- Quality of review varies (arguably) between journals
 - A hierarchy of more and less ***prestigious*** journals.
- Highest ideal: "***double-blind peer review.***"
- Particular case: post-publication peer review
- *The seminar?*

Open access in context

- Since the mid-1990s, the **subscription costs** for scientific journals have risen by over 200% (= 6 x inflationary increase)
 - Sweden: Publishing costs ~450 MSEK, ~1 % of total public funding
 - Publishers make profits of up to 40%
- Increased interest in **pushing for open-access publishing** at the university, national and international level
 - Some difficulties, **researchers**, while positive in principle, seems less willing to participate in the flip/change publication practices than the clients / funders thought
 - Other incentives for publishing, e.g. evaluative practices, **bibliometrics, esp. JIF**

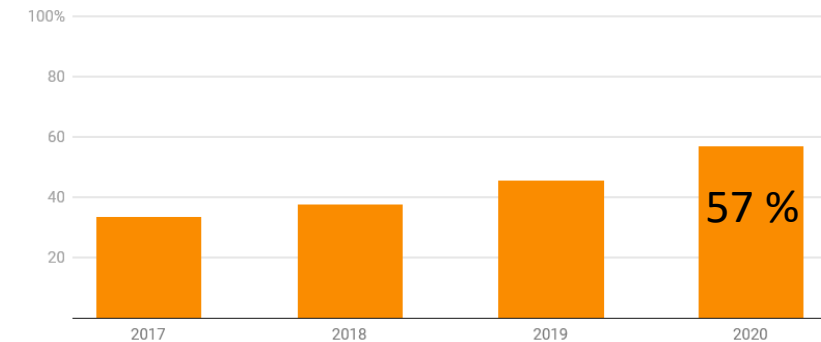
Forms of open access

- **Gold OA:** flipped model: "Author pays":
 - Today: More frequently: Read-and-publish deals
 - **Hybrid:** Subscription journal, single article
- **Green OA:** open archive, "parallell publication"
- **Diamond/Platinum OA:** free to publish **AND** read

- **Predatory!** (comes in many colours, but mainly in **Gold OA**)

! Under 2020 publicerades 57 procent av alla svenska sakkunniggranskade artiklar omedelbart öppet tillgängligt.

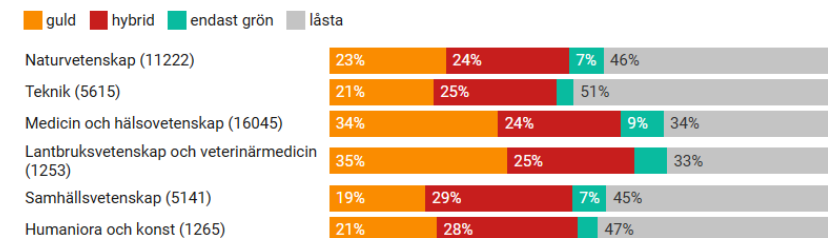
Andel omedelbart öppet tillgängliga artiklar



År anger artikelns publiceringsår. Stapeln visar andelen omedelbart öppet tillgängliga artiklar per år.

Källa: Kungliga biblioteket • Ladda ner data • Skapad med Datawrapper

Öppen tillgång per forskningsämnesområde 2020



Varje stapel visar andelen öppet tillgängliga artiklar inom vart och ett av de sex övergripande forskningsämnesområdena. Siffran inom parentes anger det totala antalet artiklar för det området. Grön visas endast då det är unikt, det vill säga det som bara finns i ett repository.

Källa: Kungliga biblioteket • Ladda ner data • Skapad med Datawrapper

European Push towards Open Access

- European Open Science Agenda, May 2016
 - *“to remove obstacles and create incentive for open access”*
- **OA-mandate** in Horizon 2020: embargo period of 6-12 månader
- Investigating possibilities for remuneration for APC:s (**Article-Processing Charges**)
 - *“transformative agreements”*
- **Coalition S (Plan S)**
 - *“With effect from 2021, all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants ... must be published in Open Access...”*

Forskningspropositionen 2020/21:60, p. 101:

I linje med de förväntade riktlinjerna för öppen vetenskap i Horisont Europa och för att påskynda omställningen till ett öppet vetenskapssystem ser regeringen behov av att uppdatera den nationella inriktningen för öppen vetenskap. Detta innebär ett tydliggörande att vetenskapliga publikationer, som är ett resultat av forskning som finansieras med offentliga medel, ska vara omedelbart öppet tillgängliga med verkan från 2021. Vad

Prop. 2021/22:1 Utgiftsområde 16, p. 263:

Ett öppet vetenskapssystem

För att öka värdet av forskning behöver den spridas inom såväl vetenskapssamhället som till samhället i övrigt. Regeringen anser därför att vetenskapliga publikationer, som är ett resultat av forskning som har finansierats med offentliga medel, ska vara omedelbart öppet tillgängliga med verkan fr.o.m. 2021. Vad gäller forskningsdata ska omställningen vara genomförd fullt ut senast 2026. För att påskynda omställningen till ett öppet vetenskapssystem har Vetenskapsrådet och Kungl. biblioteket fått förtydliga uppdrag att främja och samordna arbetet med att införa öppen tillgång till

*What's Hot and Cooking In
Scholarly Publishing*

"When librarians prepare for a negotiation, they now routinely reach for the muscle."



Libraries Face a Future of Open Access

Libraries and legacy publishers are in an unholy embrace. They need not love each other to feel they should stick together.

By JOSEPH ESPOSITO | MAY 23, 2018 | LEAVE A COMMENT

Not necessarily the outcome!



+

APC

≠



'Predatory' publishing

- Dishonest publ...
- Illegitimate journals
- Vanity press
- Fake journals

• "Rip off"
Snake oil...

Alleged questionable publishing
"Tvivelaktig publicering"



International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems

(ISSN: 2328-7675)
Current Issue: Vol.6, No.4, 2014

Dear Gustaf Nelhans,
Greetings from the editorial office

We get to know your paper titled **Citation impact in clinical guidelines** from 21st Nordic

We hope to publish this interesting paper in our journal. Would you like to share your

paper? Meanwhile, to enhance the academic

communication, we have compiled a list of journals that cover your subject area.

We are looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with you.

Best Regards,
Editorial Office of *International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems*

To: Gustaf Nelhans
From: Editorial Office of International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems

International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems
(ISSN: 2328-7675)
Current Issue: Vol.6, No.4, 2014
<http://www.ijis.net>

Dear Gustaf Nelhans,
Greetings from the editorial office of *International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems* (ISSN: 2328-7675), an Open Access journal.

We get to know your paper titled **Citation impact in clinical guidelines** from 21st Nordic Workshop on Bibliometrics and Research Metrics. It is very impressive.

We hope to publish this interesting paper in our journal. Would you like to share your paper with other scholars in this field? If you have any interest, please send your manuscript in the attachment at any of your convenience.

Meanwhile, to enhance the academic communication between us, we have compiled a list of journals that cover your subject area. We are looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with you.

International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems

Subject Coverage

Database management technologies
Heterogeneous databases
Distributed databases
Mobile databases
Temporal databases

Extreme modelling
Extreme programming
Information retrieval systems
Intelligent information systems
Information engineering

Journal Indexing
Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, CNKI SCHOLAR, EZB, WorldCat, CrossRef, Polish Scholarly Bibliography, Access to Research for Development and Innovation, Directory of Research Journals Indexing, ResearchBib, Academickeys, Zeitschriftendatenbank, JournalSeek, Universal Impact Factor, MIAR, etc.

We are looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with you.

Best Regards,

Editorial Office of *International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems*

Subject Coverage

Database management technologies
Information retrieval systems
Extreme programming
Heterogeneous databases
Distributed databases

Extreme modelling
Extreme programming
Information retrieval systems
Intelligent information systems
Information engineering

APC: \$770
Journal Indexing

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, CNKI SCHOLAR, EZB, **WorldCat, CrossRef**, Polish Scholarly Bibliography, Access to Research for Development and Innovation, Directory of Research Journals Indexing, ResearchBib, Academickeys, Zeitschriftendatenbank, JournalSeek, Universal Impact Factor, MIAR, etc.

Best Regards,

Editorial Office of *International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems*

International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems

[Home](#) | [Archive](#) | [Special Issues](#) | [Indexing](#) | [Editorial Board](#) | [Reviewers](#) | [Guidelines](#) | [Submission](#) | [Article Processing Charges](#) | [Publica](#)

[Home](#) / [Journals](#) / [Electrical & Computer Science](#) / [International Journal of Intelligent Information Systems](#) / [Editorial Board](#)

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief



Affiliation:
Address:

Ed
Ac

Edit
sch
sch
folc
take
Inte
Syst

Editorial Members

Abdulganiyu Abdu Yusuf

National Biotechnology Development Agency
Abuja, Nigeria

Enigricus Deligiannis

Department of Business Administration of Food
and Agricultural Enterprises, University of Patras
Agrinio, Aitolokarnania, Greece

Makdi Hashemzadeh

Faculty of Information Technology and Computer
Engineering, Azarbaijan Shahid Madani
University
Tabriz, E-Azarbaijan, Iran

Th

Dep
Eng
And
Mac

APC:s in bitcoin



We accept payment using Bitcoin:



[Learn more about bitcoin . .](#)

INFORMATION

[For Readers](#)

[For Authors](#)

[For Librarians](#)

<https://ephjournal.com/index.php/as>



“submit your print-ready manuscript in pdf-format with a check for \$770”



Study: source data

SwePub journal publication data was matched against three curated blacklists:

- 1. *Journals Black List*** maintained by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education in Iran [blacklist.research.ac.ir]
 1. “invalid and fake publications” (2,180 titles from 88 publishers)
- 2. *DOAJ list of journals removed*** from the Open Access list [blog.doaj.org/tag/removed-journals]
 1. “Suspected editorial misconduct by publisher”, (642 titles)
- 3. *Cabell’s Blacklist***, by kind permission [www2.cabells.com/about-blacklist]
 1. (9,503 titles from 446 publishers); (secondary criteria)
4. (*Elsevier: Discontinued-sources-from-Scopus_Sept_2018*
 - *Metrics; Publication concerns, Radar (424 titles)*)

Cabell's criteria

	Severe	Less severe		Grey zone	
V03	Hijacked journal (defined as a fraudulent website created to look like a legitimate academic journal for the purpose of offering academics the opportunity to rapidly publish their research for a fee).	V05	The journal or publisher claims to be a non-profit when it is actually a for-profit company.	V02	The same article appears in more than one journal.
V11	Editors do not actually exist or are deceased.	V06	The publisher hides or obscures relationships with for-profit partner companies.	V20	The journal states there is an APC or other fee but does not give information on the amount.
V15	Falsely claims indexing in well-known databases (especially SCOPUS, DOAJ, JCR, and Cabells).	V32	Gender bias in the editorial board.	V22	The author must pay APC or publication fee before submitting the article (specifically calls the fee a publication fee, not a submission fee).
V37	The journal or publisher uses a virtual office or other proxy business as its physical address.	V48	The journal purposefully publishes controversial articles in the interest of boosting citation count.	V25	The name of the journal references a country or demographic that does not relate to the content or origin of the journal.
V71	The journal publishes papers presented at conferences without additional peer review.	V56	No policies for digital preservation.	V34	Inadequate peer review (i.e., a single reader reviews submissions, peer reviewers read papers outside their field of study, etc.).
		V66	The journal copyproofs and locks PDFs.	V40	Poor grammar and/or spelling.
				V43	The publisher displays prominent statements that promise rapid publication and/or unusually quick peer review (less than 4 weeks).

Sweden AQP 2012-2017

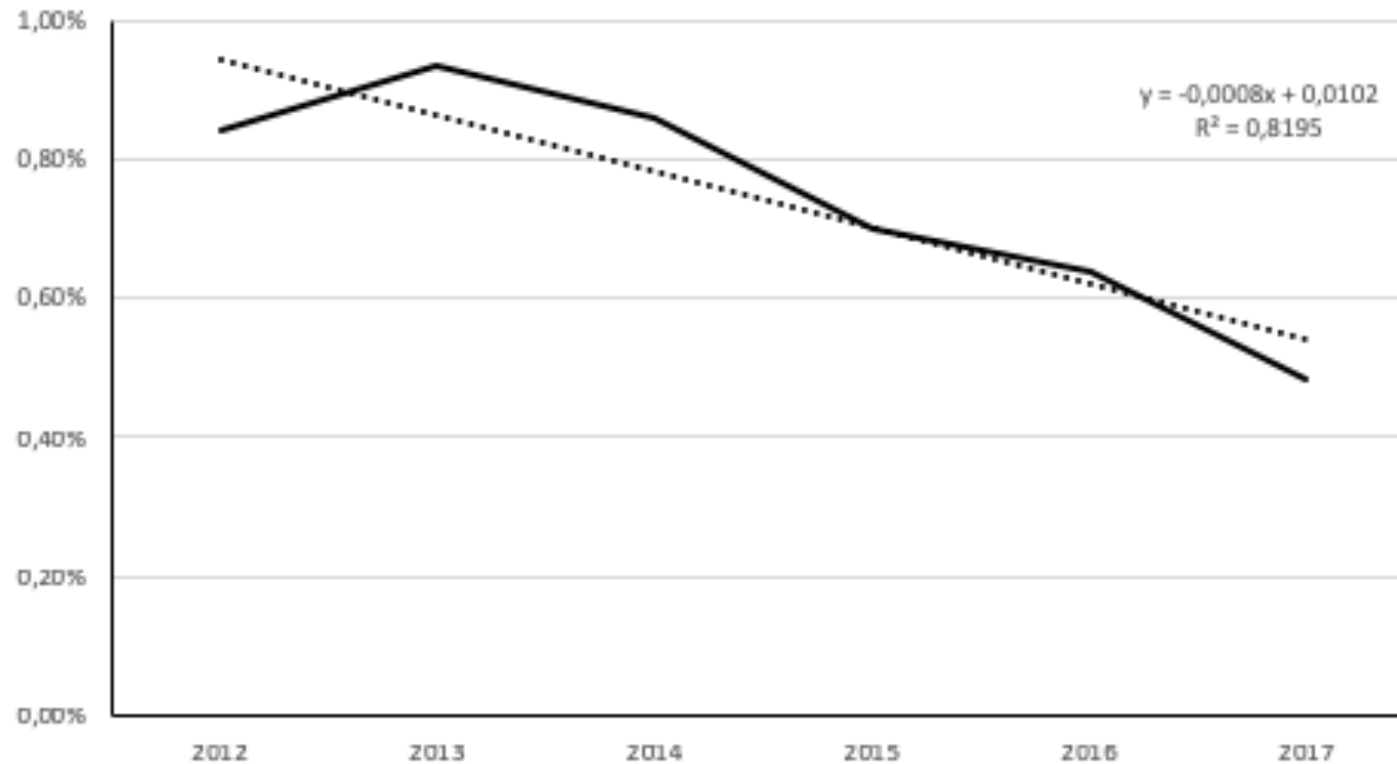


Figure 1: Share of SQP publishing in Sweden 2012-2017

Sweden QP 2012-2017

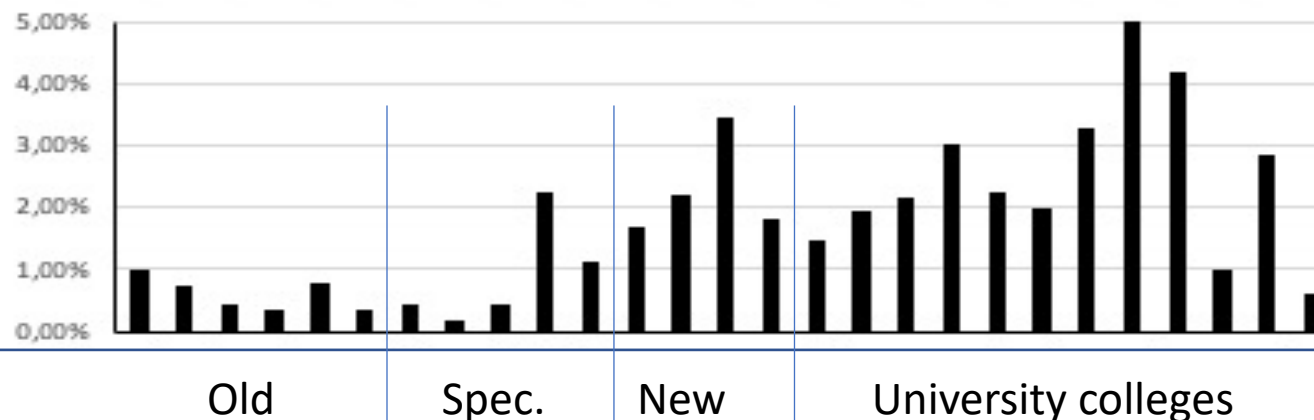
Table 1: Organisation share of SQP journal publications (fractionalized) as a share of the total number of registered journal publications in SwePub 2012-2017 and for the full period. Gradual colour scale: Red: Highest share, White: 0.7 % (median), Blue: Lowest share

Lärosäte	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total 2012-17
Old	0,79%	1,11%	1,14%	1,26%	1,18%	0,48%	0,99%
	0,80%	0,92%	1,03%	0,39%	0,56%	0,54%	0,71%
	0,34%	0,60%	0,52%	0,38%	0,33%	0,39%	0,43%
	0,51%	0,60%	0,45%	0,26%	0,20%	0,13%	0,35%
	0,64%	0,98%	0,73%	0,78%	0,79%	0,73%	0,77%
	0,26%	0,61%	0,41%	0,35%	0,28%	0,17%	0,35%
Spec.	0,32%	0,16%	0,70%	0,36%	0,64%	0,33%	0,42%
	0,30%	0,15%	0,09%	0,13%	0,19%	0,09%	0,16%
	0,65%	0,92%	0,36%	0,26%	0,34%	0,26%	0,45%
	4,31%	3,18%	3,01%	1,61%	1,69%	0,93%	2,35%
	1,70%	0,90%	1,13%	0,92%	0,86%	0,00%	1,11%
New	1,61%	2,52%	2,31%	1,47%	1,17%	0,79%	1,65%
	2,02%	3,23%	2,10%	2,24%	2,04%	1,29%	2,16%
	4,31%	3,10%	1,71%	3,93%	3,23%	4,93%	3,50%
	2,01%	2,15%	2,00%	2,44%	1,63%	0,45%	1,77%
Univ. coll.	0,86%	1,59%	2,08%	0,82%	1,61%	1,64%	1,46%
	1,37%	2,79%	4,04%	1,56%	0,42%	1,54%	1,93%
	2,63%	1,83%	2,83%	1,00%	2,56%	1,97%	2,12%
	3,31%	4,74%	3,05%	3,47%	1,33%	3,72%	3,25%
	2,20%	1,74%	4,88%	1,69%	3,68%	0,00%	2,32%
	3,12%	2,96%	2,49%	2,40%	0,80%	0,69%	1,99%
	6,90%	2,07%	2,84%	2,23%	2,20%	3,09%	3,25%
	4,83%	8,13%	7,04%	4,49%	2,52%	2,44%	5,09%
	3,88%	2,75%	5,52%	6,02%	2,91%	3,55%	4,17%
	0,63%	0,59%	0,72%	0,95%	1,91%	0,89%	0,97%
	3,02%	4,29%	3,61%	4,98%	0,72%	1,39%	2,93%
	1,72%	0,96%	0,00%	0,00%	0,90%	0,00%	0,58%
Total sum	0,86%	0,95%	0,87%	0,71%	0,66%	0,51%	0,76%

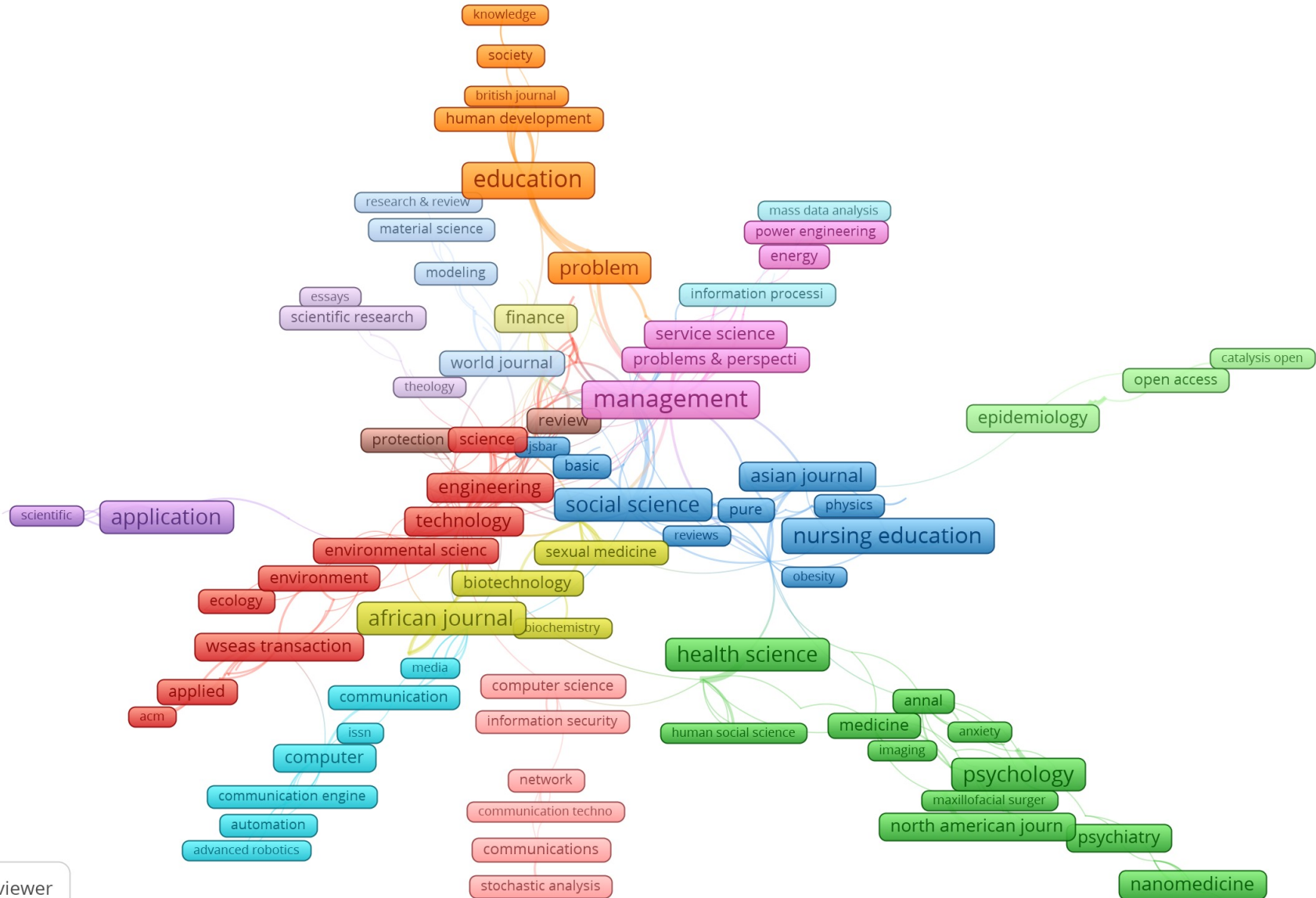
HEI categories

Table 4: Difference in SQP publishing (mean values and range) between different organisation categories.

	Median	Mean	Range (min, yearly)	Range (max, yearly)
Older univ.	0,57%	0,60%	0,13%	1,26%
Special univ.	0,45%	0,90%	0,00%	4,31%
Younger univ	1,96%	2,27%	0,45%	4,93%
Univ Colleges	2,22%	2,51%	0,00%	8,13%
Total	0,76%	0,76%	0,76%	0,76%



Source title words

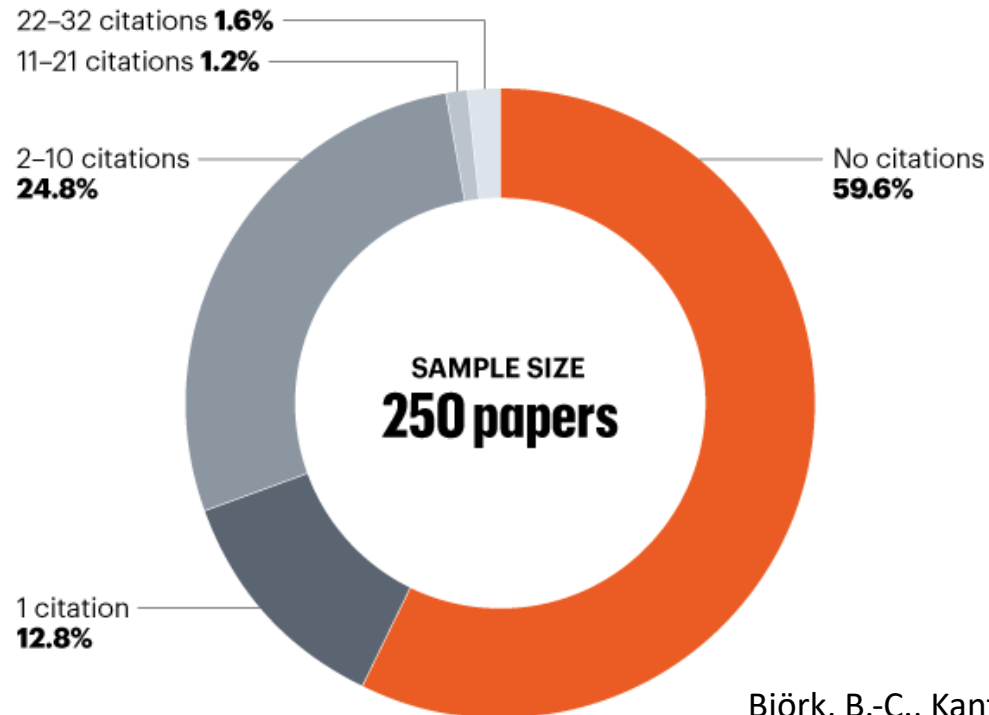


Predatory-journal papers have little scientific impact

Analysis of hundreds of articles in predatory titles shows that 60% have never been cited.

LIMITED READERSHIP

Papers published in predatory journals five years ago have attracted few or no citations.



Björk, B.-C., Kanto-Karvonen, S. & Harviainen, J. T.
Preprint at <https://arxiv.org/abs/1912.10228> (2019).

Identifying questionable publishing actors

- White lists:

- Citeringsdatabaser: WoS – *Journal Citations Reports*; Scopus
- “Norwegian list” – (Level 0, 1, 2)
- Subject-specific lists (e.g. ABS)

- Black lists

- ~~Beall’s list~~ (defunct)
- Cabell’s (\$)
- “Norwegian list” – “Level X”

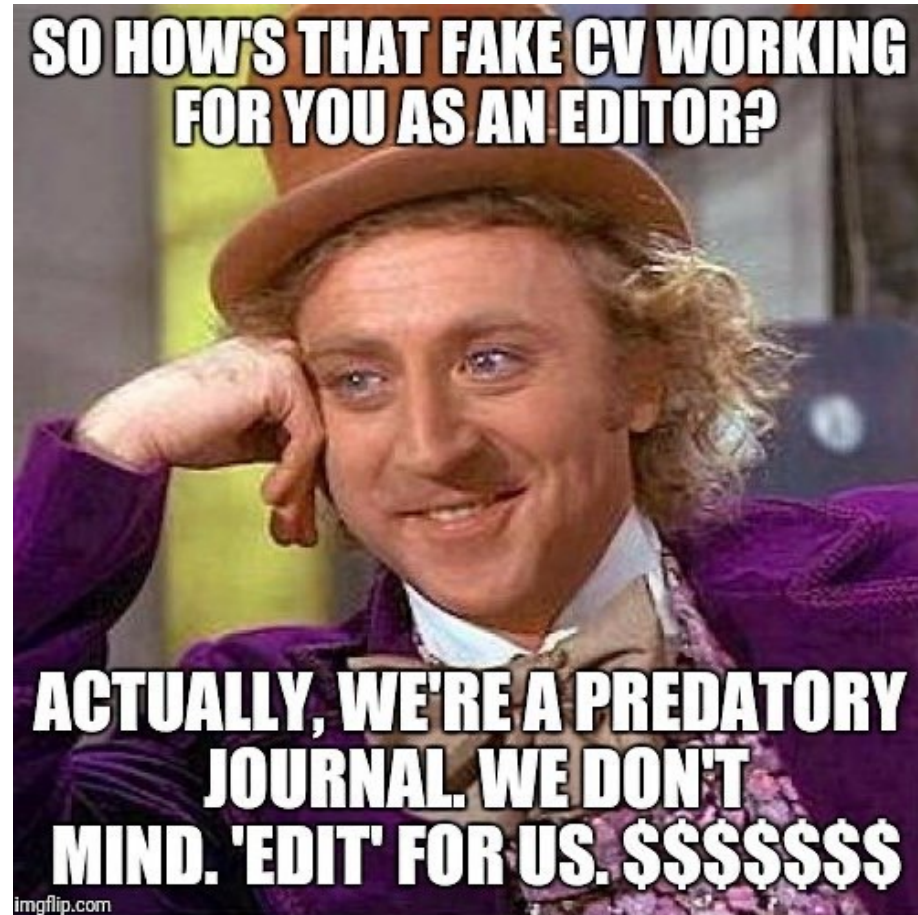


University library

Choose the right journal or publisher for your research

thinkchecksubmit.org

Boils down to research ethics



Thank you!

gustaf.nelhans@hb.se

