Mapping the global landscape of journals

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Contents

A major inspiration and strong reading recommendation for anyone interested in this topic

QSS

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Recalibrating the scope of scholarly publishing: A modest step in a vast decolonization process

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ABSTRACT

By analyzing 25,671 journals largely absent from common journal counts, as well as Web of Science and Scopus, this study demonstrates that scholarly communication is more of a global endeavor than is commonly credited. These journals, employing the open-source publishing platform Open Journal Systems (OJS), have published 5.8 million items; they are in 136 countries, with 79.9% in the Global South and 84.2% following the OA diamond model (charging neither reader nor author). A substantial proportion of journals operate in more than one language (48.3%), with research published in 60 languages (led by English, Indonesian, Spanish, and Portuguese). The journals are distributed across the social sciences (45.9%), STEM (40.3%), and the humanities (13.8%). For all their geographic, linguistic, and disciplinary diversity, 1.2% are indexed in the Web of Science and 5.7% in Scopus. On the other hand, 1.0% are found in Cabell's Predatory Reports, and 1.4% show up in Beall's (2021) questionable list. This paper seeks to both contribute to and historically situate the expanded scale and diversity of scholarly publishing in the hope that this recognition may assist humankind in taking full advantage of what is increasingly a global research enterprise.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2018, Philip G. Altbach and Hans de Wit, two leading scholars of higher education at Boston College, published "Too Much Academic Research Is Being Published" in *University World News*. In making their case, Altbach and de Wit point out that although "no one knows how many scientific journals there are ... several estimates point to around 30,000" (Altbach & de Wit, 2018)[1]. Finding the number excessive, they declare "a crisis in academic publishing" involving "too much pressure on top journals" and "the rise of predatory journals and publishers that publish low or marginal quality research." They recommend steps be taken to reduce the amount of research published[2]. The analysis in this article not only challenges such journal estimates but calls for a recognition of the Global South's research commitment and

[1] Just how dated this number may be is suggested by the Library of Congress study of 1963, which found a global total of 35,000 journals, with 100 titles from Indonesia (Gottschalk & Desmond, 1963).
[2] Also in 2018, Gianfranco Pacchioni, Vice-Rector for Research at the University of Milano Bicocca, published *The Overproduction of Truth* (Pacchioni, 2018) on a similar theme ("accompanied by objective data and findings") claiming that as a result of the internet, "in a short time the world of research has changed from the passionate activity of a few selected people to a crowded universe of practitioners, often with few ideas and sharing little or no ethical values" (p. 4).

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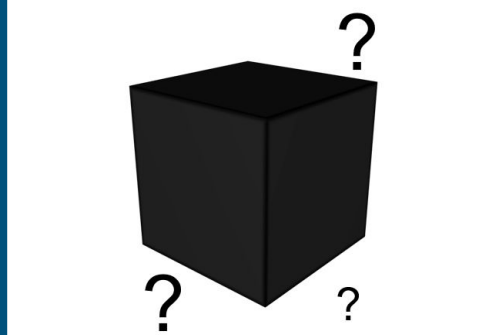
The problem

There are now more scholarly journals than ever before, publishing an increasing total number of articles every year (Bornmann, Haunschild & Mutz 2021).

Change in this space is constant, yet comprehensive knowledge about what and why changes are happening still lacks a lot of scope and depth, mostly due to the limitations in available data.

There is a large number of journals that are currently invisible to most bibliometric research (see e.g. Khanna, Ball, Alperin et al 2022) .

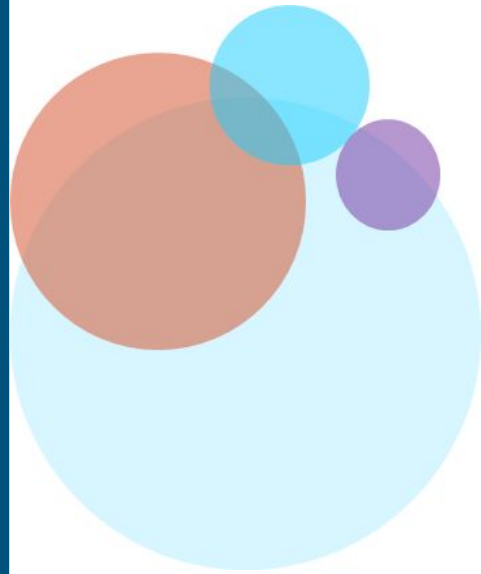
Even if data sources would be more complete the key obstacle for their extended use in research purposes following open science approaches is their commercial and proprietary nature.



What are the consequences

What might come as a surprise to many is that we do not have comprehensive answers to the following questions:

- How many scholarly journals are there?
- How many articles do they publish?
- **In what languages do they publish?**
- How are they divided into publishers?
- How many are associated with a scholarly society?
- How are they divided across research areas?
- **How are they divided geographically?**
- How many are publishing Open Access?



What are the consequences (cont.)

If we would have a solid common data foundation it would enable research into the changing landscape of journal and studying e.g. the following phenomena:

- Creation of new journals
- Publisher changes for journals
- Merging journals
- Journal renaming/re-scoping
- **Momentum of journals towards internationalization**
- Changing publication models
- Discontinued journals
- Disappeared journals

Towards a solution

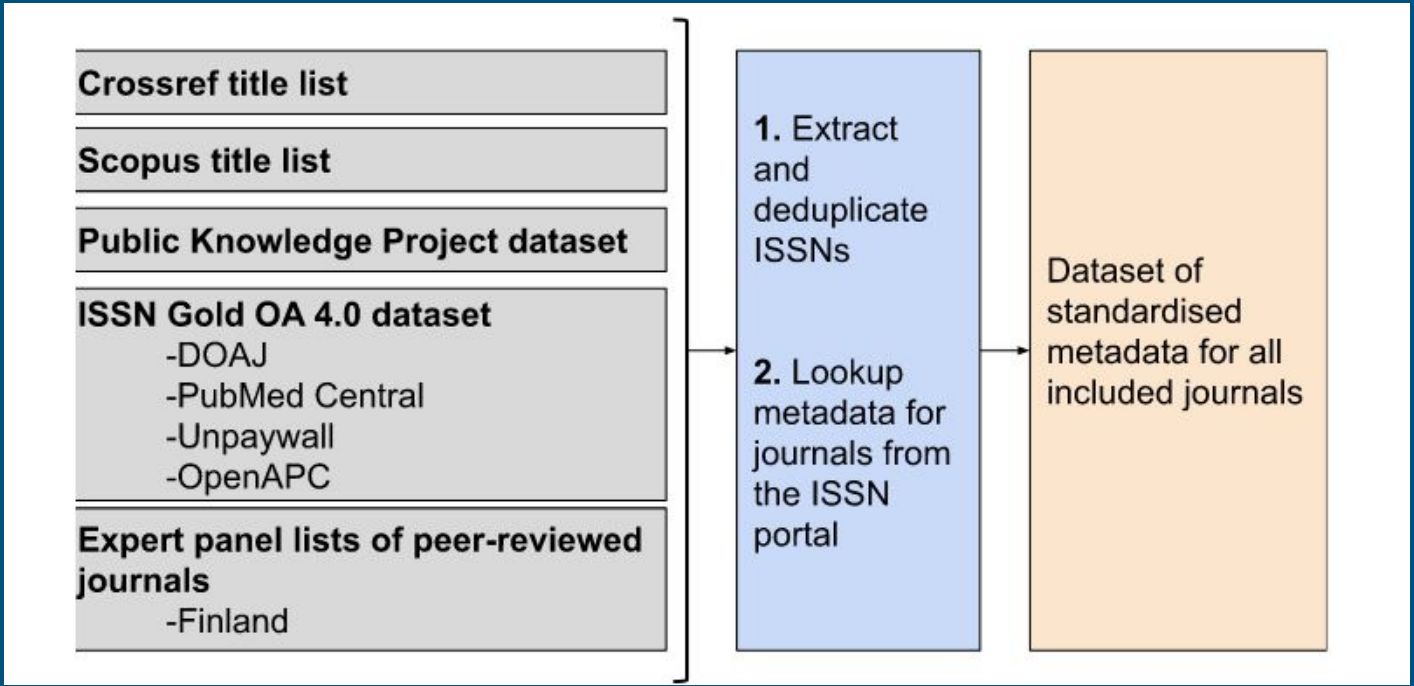
There is a lot of public data available about journals available in different datasets and through different services

The ISSN International Center provides free access to standardised metadata for all journals

The/One approach to start building a foundation based on open data:

1. Collect as wide and broad list of journals globally based on ISSN numbers
2. Deduplicate
3. Query the ISSN center for standardised metadata for all journals

Towards a solution (cont.)

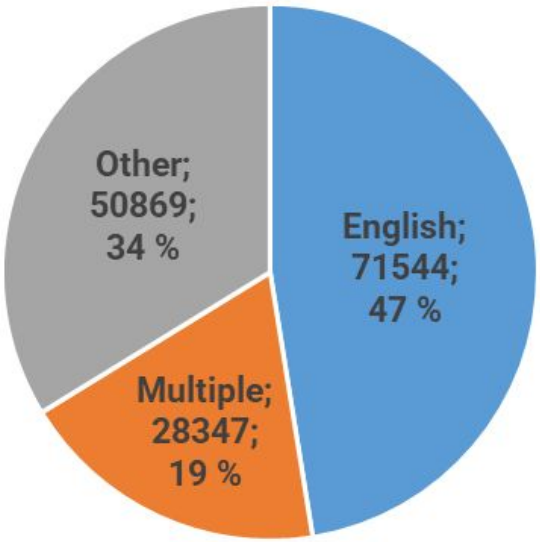


Towards a solution (cont.)

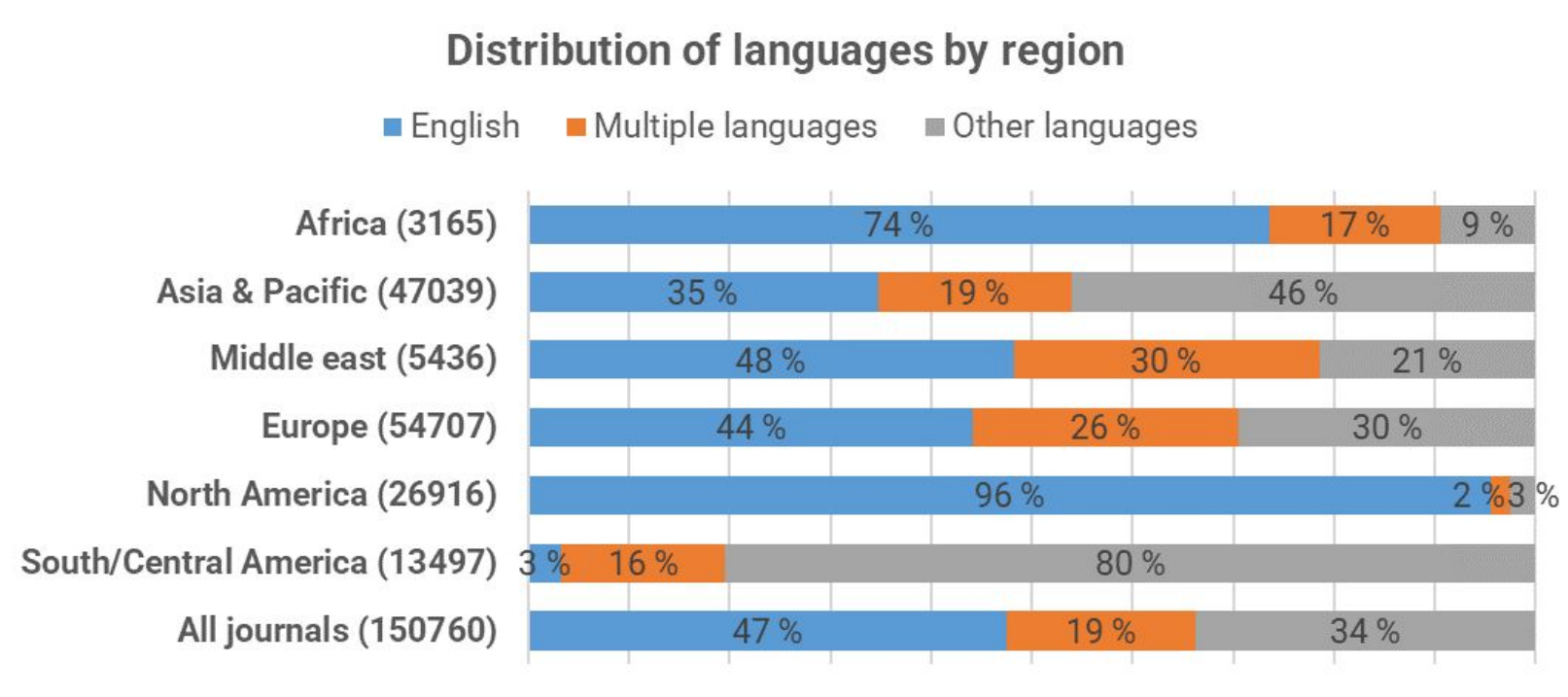
Our preliminary dataset is aggregated from five local and global information sources including a total of 152,644 unique journals matched with bibliographic metadata records from the International ISSN Centre

Source	1 source	2 sources	3 sources	4 sources	5 sources	Journals
JUFO	3296	2783	14127	3483	720	24409
Scopus	8693	8690	17820	4615	720	40538
PKP	13278	9124	20068	2176	720	45366
Bielefeld	16678	24728	24606	4797	720	71529
Crossref	28276	31979	37529	4933	720	103437
Total	70221	38652	38050	5001	720	152644

Multilingualism



Multilingualism (cont.)



Conclusions

Recently started ongoing research, but…

- Early evidence paints a much more globally diverse and multilingual landscape than selective commercial databases can provide.
- There is a lot of potential for increasing the visibility, discoverability, and inclusion of more scholarly journals into bibliometric research.
- Some way of crowdsourcing metadata for these journals would be needed.
- Methods for managing data additions, changes, and forks could probably lean towards systems and practices familiar from open source software development.


DĚKUJI
AŞANTE
Shukran
toda
Merci
OBRIGADO
Salamat
madake
TAK
Thank you
СПАСИБО
GRACIAS
ARigato
tack
ДЯКУЮ
ТАКК
Grazie
DANKE

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