

WHERE NOT TO PUBLISH: List and analysis of potential scam journals in health publishing

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GOAL

The goal of this work is to offer a specific tool to identify scams in academic health journals by analysing their degree of compliance with the quality criteria of selected sources.

METHODOLOGY

To compile a specific list of potentially fraudulent health journals, we started by selecting journals from multidisciplinary blacklists and from lists offered by academic literature. After that, we selected different sources, all of them focused on assessing the quality of academic journals or, specifically, of academic health journals (16 sources). The work ended by cross-checking the journals on our list against all these sources to verify whether the journals were indexed or met the quality criteria, so as to get a more accurate picture of scam journals in health publishing.

1-. COMPILING A LIST OF HEALTH JOURNALS

- **Journals from blacklists:**

There are many blacklists of potentially fraudulent publications. One of the premises of our work was that we had to work with open blacklists:

- [Beall List](#)
- [Stop Predatory Journals](#)
- [Kscien List](#)
- [No DOAJ](#)

All these sources are multidisciplinary, not focused only on the health sciences. To narrow down the list to health journals, the next step was to detect and select them, which we did by using the keywords of the MeSH Thesaurus and reviewing the titles.

Result: **451** health journals from blacklists were included for the analysis.

- **Journals from specific health works:**

There is a large (and growing) academic literature focused on scam journals of specific health disciplines. A lot of articles offer a detailed list of scam journals in their fields, helping researchers in those fields in the difficult task of selecting a journal.

Those journals, many of them health journals, selected from lists in different articles¹, were also added to our list.

Result: **417** health journals from lists in specific health works were included for the analysis.

The outcome of this first selection is a final list with **868 (451 + 417) journals**, all of them health (or health-related) and potentially predatory journals.

¹ See list of references at the end.

2-. SELECTING QUALITY SOURCES FOR THE ANALYSIS

Once we have our final list of journals, we need to choose the quality sources that we will use to check the journals' reliability. There are a lot of quality indicators to measure how reliable a health journal is. We selected the following:

1. **Databases:** the fact that a journal is included in any of the following databases is a quality indicator because they all apply strict selection criteria, or simply because they are comprehensive databases that collect *all* the academic journals (or all the academic *open* journals), which means that these sources have a title and an ISSN and are published by academic organisations:
 - a. [Journal Citation Report](#)
 - b. [Web of Science](#)
 - c. [Medline](#)
 - d. [Scopus](#)
 - e. [MIAR](#)
 - f. [Ulrichweb](#)
 - g. [DOAJ](#)
2. **Recommendations from editors:** we have selected four different editors' associations with strict quality criteria for academic journals, and in particular, academic health journals:
 - a. [ICMJE](#)
 - b. [WAME](#)
 - c. [COPE](#)
 - d. [ISMTE](#)
3. **Other sources:** according to our aim, we have selected other quality sources, all of them focused on academic journals. These sources are in fact databases that include a list of journals that have been checked against their quality criteria:
 - a. [JournalGuide](#)
 - b. [Edanz Journal](#)
 - c. [JournalTOC](#)
 - d. [Retraction Watch](#)

- e. [Google Scholar Metrics](#)

3-. COLLATING THE JOURNALS

On the one hand, we have a list of potentially fraudulent health journals whose reliability we want to analyse. On the other hand, we have a selection of quality sources that will be useful for this analysis and for having more information about what these journals are and what their aim is.

Checking journals against all these criteria will allow us to have more information about the quality of the publication and will offer more information to health researchers to select a journal where to publish.

PRESENTATION OF DATA: *Airtable*

The tool comes as a free software, [Airtable](#), which works similarly to Excel but with more options: present data in the cloud, share them with users, interact with users and embed the tool in WordPress.

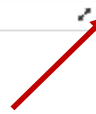
HOW TO USE AIRTABLE

Users can access the tool through the UV Library web service: ["On no publicar"](#)



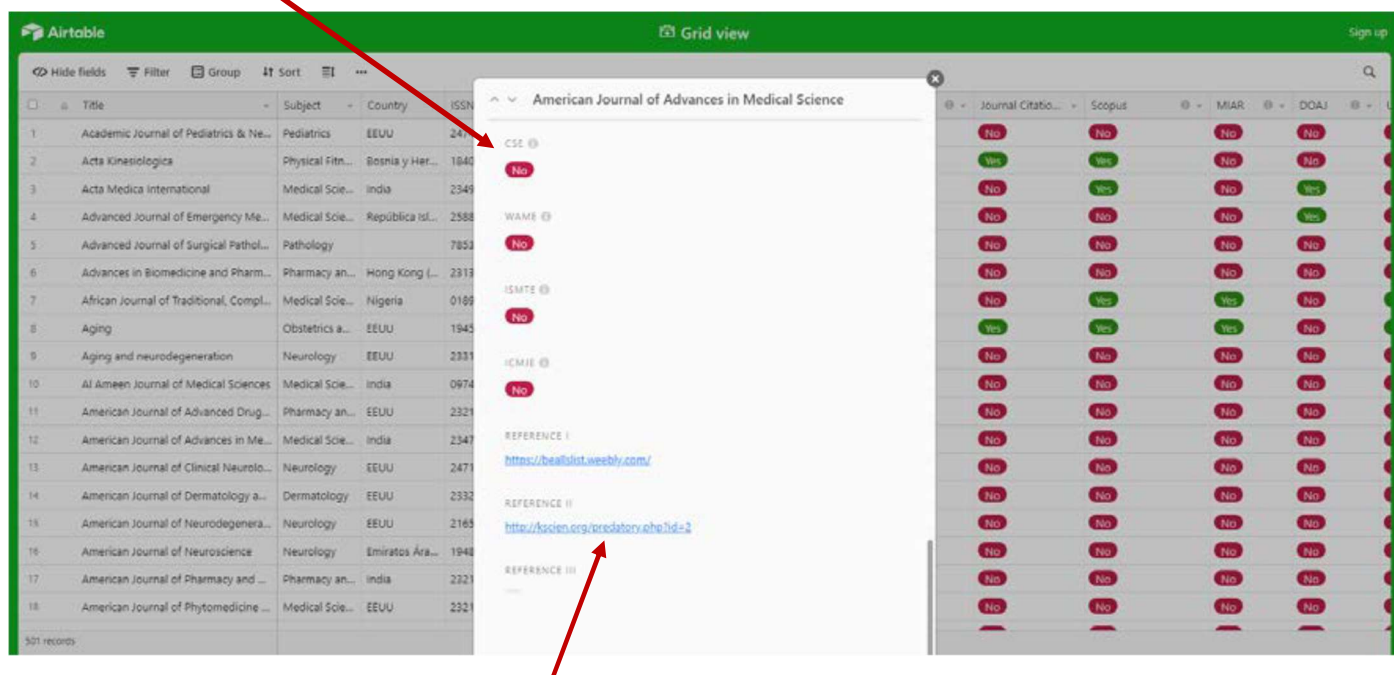
1-. First, click on “*View larger version*” to expand it:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	Subject	Country	ISSN	EISSN	Pu
1	Academic Journal of Pediatrics & Ne...	Pediatrics	EEUU	2474-7521		Ju
2	Acta Kinesiologica	Physical Fitn...	Bosnia y Her...	1840-2976	1840-3700	Dr
3	Acta Medica International	Medical Scie...	India	2349-0578	2349-0896	Te
4	Advanced Journal of Emergency Me...	Medical Scie...	República Isl...	2588-400X		Te
5	Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathol...	Pathology		7853-1292		Ad
6	Advances in Biomedicine and Pharm...	Pharmacy an...	Hong Kong (...)	2313-7479		Bar
7	African Journal of Traditional, Compl...	Medical Scie...	Nigeria	0189-6016		D f
8	Aging	Obstetrics a...	EEUU	1945-4589		Im
9	Aging and neurodegeneration	Neurology	EEUU	2331-2432	2331-2424	Re
10	Al Ameen Journal of Medical Sciences	Medical Scie...	India	0974-1143		Sci
11	American Journal of Advanced Drug...	Pharmacy an...	EEUU	2321-547X		Ins
12	American Journal of Advances in Me...	Medical Scie...	India	2347-2766		Ing
13	American Journal of Clinical Neurolo...	Neurology	EEUU	2471-7231	2471-724X	Pu
14	American Journal of Dermatology a...	Dermatology	EEUU	2332-8487	2332-8479	Sci
501 records						
View larger version						



Fraus editorials. Biblioteca Ciències d...														
Evaluation														
<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	Subject	Country	Start Year	ISSN	EISSN	Publisher	URL	Journal Citatio...	WOS Clar...	Medline	Scopus	MIAR	DOAJ
1	Academic Jour...	Pediatrics	EEUU	2015-	2474-7521		Juniper Publish...	https://juniper-publi...	No	No	No	No	No	No
2	Acta Kinesiologica	Physical Fitn...	Bosnia y Her...	2007-	1840-2976	1840-3700	Društvo Pedago...	https://www.as...	No	No	No	No	No	No
3	Acta Medica Inte...	Medical Scie...	India	2014-	2349-0578	2349-0896	Teerthankar Ma...	https://www.as...	No	No	No	No	No	No
4	Acta Scientiae et...	Multidiscipli...	Azerbaijan	2015-	2410-9738	2516-1896	Nekhchala Univ...	https://www.as...	No	No	No	No	No	No
5	Acta Velit...	Pharmacy an...	India	2014-	2354-2092		SAE Publications	https://saepu...	No	No	No	No	No	No
6	Advance Researc...	Multidiscipli...	India	2016-	2456-1045		International Jo...	https://www.i-j...	No	No	No	No	No	No
7	Advanced Jour...	Medical Scie...	República Isl...	2017-	2588-400X		Tehran Universit...	https://ajem-hu...	No	No	No	No	No	No
8	Advanced Jour...	Pathology		-	7853-1292		Advanced Schol...	https://ajshu...	No	No	No	No	No	No
9	Advances in Bio...	Pharmacy an...	China	2014-	2313-7479		Bairen Intl Enta...	https://ajshu...	No	No	No	No	No	No
10	African Journal o...	Medical Scie...	Nigeria	2004-	0189-6016		D & P U. Faculty ...	https://www.journa...	No	No	No	No	No	No
11	Aging	Obstetrics a...	EEUU	2000-	1945-4589		Impact Journals ...	https://www.i-j...	No	No	No	No	No	No
12	Aging and neur...	Neurology	EEUU	2015-2014	2331-2432	2331-2424	Research Public...	https://www.resea...	No	No	No	No	No	No
13	Ahead Internatio...	Multidiscipli...	India	2016-	2456-205X		SL44 Publications	https://www.sla...	No	No	No	No	No	No
14	Al Ameen Jour...	Medical Scie...	India	2009-	0974-1143		Scientific and R...	https://www.sci...	No	No	No	No	No	No
15	American Intern...	Multidiscipli...	EEUU	2011-	2162-180X	2162-142X	Centre for Prom...	https://www.as...	No	No	No	No	No	No
16	American Journa...	Pharmacy an...	EEUU	2013-	2321-547X		Insight Medical ...	https://www.ins...	No	No	No	No	No	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	American Journa...	Medical Scie...	India	2013-	2347-2766		Ingenuious Know...	https://www.as...	No	No	No	No	No	No
721 records														

Quality criteria: users can check whether the journal is indexed or meets the quality criteria of a given source (YES/NO)



Airtable Grid view

Hide fields Filter Group Sort

American Journal of Advances in Medical Science

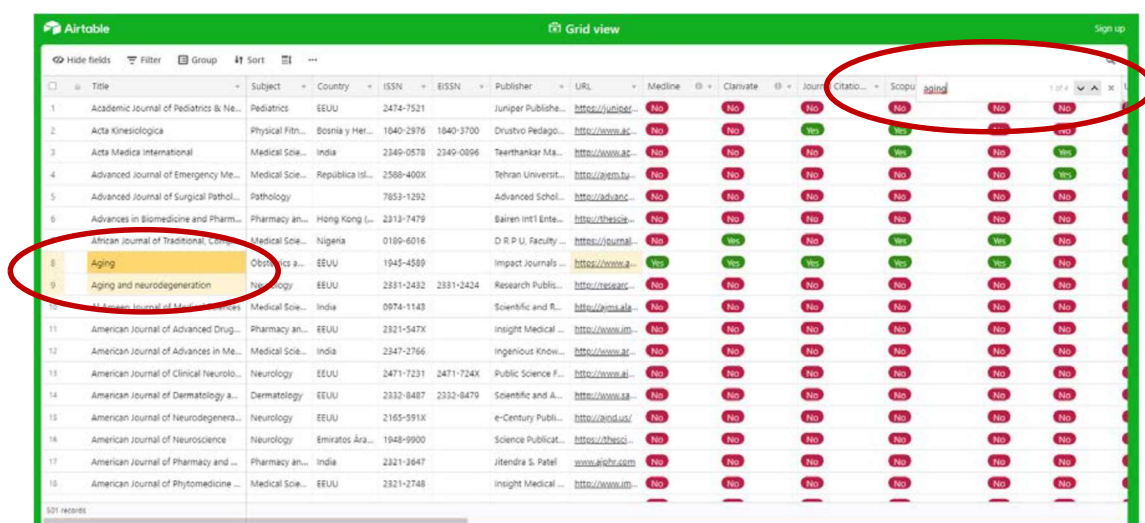
	Title	Subject	Country	ISSN	Source	Journal Citation	Scopus	MIAR	DOAJ
1	Academic Journal of Pediatrics & Ne...	Pediatrics	EEUU	2471	CSE	No	No	No	No
2	Acta Kinesiologica	Physical Fitt...	Bosnia y Her...	1840	WAME	No	Yes	No	No
3	Acta Medica International	Medical Scie...	India	2349	ISMTS	No	Yes	No	Yes
4	Advanced Journal of Emergency Me...	Medical Scie...	República Isl...	2588	ICMIE	No	No	No	No
5	Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathol...	Pathology		7853	REFERENCE I	No	No	No	No
6	Advances in Biomedicine and Pharm...	Pharmacy an...	Hong Kong (...)	2313	REFERENCE II	No	No	No	No
7	African Journal of Traditional, Compl...	Medical Scie...	Nigeria	0189	REFERENCE III	No	Yes	Yes	No
8	Aging	Obstetrics a...	EEUU	1945		Yes	Yes	Yes	No
9	Aging and neurodegeneration	Neurology	EEUU	2331		No	No	No	No
10	Al Ameen Journal of Medical Sciences	Medical Scie...	India	0974		No	No	No	No
11	American Journal of Advanced Drug...	Pharmacy an...	EEUU	2321		No	No	No	No
12	American Journal of Advances in Me...	Medical Scie...	India	2347		No	No	No	No
13	American Journal of Clinical Neurolo...	Neurology	EEUU	2471		No	No	No	No
14	American Journal of Dermatology a...	Dermatology	EEUU	2332		No	No	No	No
15	American Journal of Neurodegenera...	Neurology	EEUU	2165		No	No	No	No
16	American Journal of Neuroscience	Neurology	Emiratos Ára...	1948		No	No	No	No
17	American Journal of Pharmacy and ...	Pharmacy an...	India	2321		No	No	No	No
18	American Journal of Phytomedicine ...	Medical Scie...	EEUU	2321		No	No	No	No

501 records

Source of the journal

2-. **Search for a specific journal:** the tool allows searching by title, ISSN or another data (country, publisher, etc.). Pay attention because most of these journals are scams, that is, you can find fake ISSN or even no ISSN at all.

The search box is at the top right corner:



Airtable Grid view

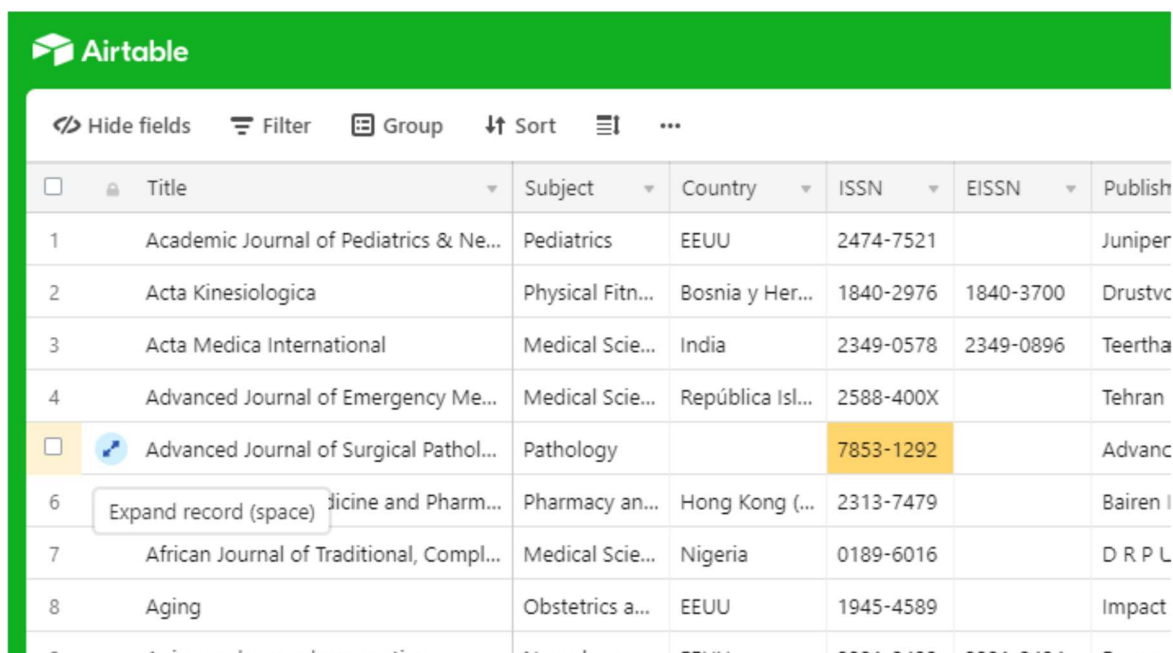
Hide fields Filter Group Sort

	Title	Subject	Country	ISSN	E-ISSN	Publisher	URL	Medline	Clinvate	Journal Citation	Scopus	MIAR	DOAJ
1	Academic Journal of Pediatrics & Ne...	Pediatrics	EEUU	2474-7521		Juniper Publish...	http://www.juniper...	No	No	No	No	No	No
2	Acta Kinesiologica	Physical Fitt...	Bosnia y Her...	1840-2976	1840-3700	Orustvo Pedago...	http://www.akt...	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
3	Acta Medica International	Medical Scie...	India	2349-0578	2349-0896	Teehthankar Ma...	http://www.ama...	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
4	Advanced Journal of Emergency Me...	Medical Scie...	República Isl...	2588-400X		Tehran Universit...	http://ajem.tu...	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
5	Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathol...	Pathology		7853-1292		Advanced Schol...	http://ajsp.ac...	No	No	No	No	No	No
6	Advances in Biomedicine and Pharm...	Pharmacy an...	Hong Kong (...)	2313-7479		Balren Intl Ente...	http://thescis...	No	No	No	No	No	No
7	African Journal of Traditional, Compl...	Medical Scie...	Nigeria	0189-6016		D R P U Faculty ...	http://journal...	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
8	Aging	Obstetrics a...	EEUU	1945-4589		Impact Journals ...	http://www.a...	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
9	Aging and neurodegeneration	Neurology	EEUU	2331-2432	2331-2424	Research Public...	http://research...	No	No	No	No	No	No
10	Al Ameen Journal of Medical Sciences	Medical Scie...	India	0974-1143		Scientific and R...	http://www.ala...	No	No	No	No	No	No
11	American Journal of Advanced Drug...	Pharmacy an...	EEUU	2321-547X		Insight Medical ...	http://www.ajm...	No	No	No	No	No	No
12	American Journal of Advances in Me...	Medical Scie...	India	2347-2766		Ingenuious Know...	http://www.aj...	No	No	No	No	No	No
13	American Journal of Clinical Neurolo...	Neurology	EEUU	2471-7231	2471-724X	Public Science F...	http://www.aj...	No	No	No	No	No	No
14	American Journal of Dermatology a...	Dermatology	EEUU	2332-8487	2332-8479	Scientific and A...	http://www.aj...	No	No	No	No	No	No
15	American Journal of Neurodegenera...	Neurology	EEUU	2165-591X		e-Century Publ...	http://ajnd.us/...	No	No	No	No	No	No
16	American Journal of Neuroscience	Neurology	Emiratos Ára...	1948-9900		Science Publicat...	http://thesci...	No	No	No	No	No	No
17	American Journal of Pharmacy and ...	Pharmacy an...	India	2321-3647		Jitendra S. Patel	www.ajpharm...	No	No	No	No	No	No
18	American Journal of Phytomedicine ...	Medical Scie...	EEUU	2321-2748		Insight Medical ...	http://www.ajm...	No	No	No	No	No	No

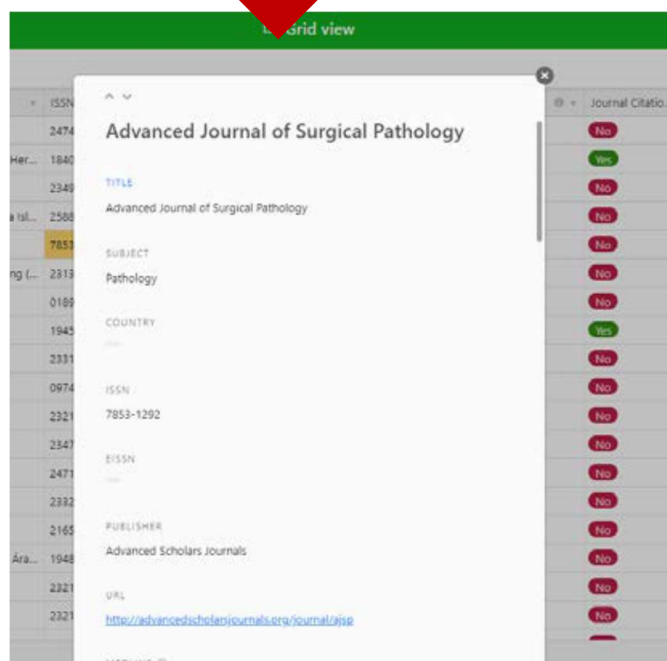
501 records



3-. Get information about a journal: once you have selected a journal, click on "Expand record (space)" and you will see a window with all the information about it.



	Title	Subject	Country	ISSN	EISSN	Publisher
1	Academic Journal of Pediatrics & Ne...	Pediatrics	EEUU	2474-7521		Juniper
2	Acta Kinesiologica	Physical Fitn...	Bosnia y Her...	1840-2976	1840-3700	Drustvc
3	Acta Medica International	Medical Scie...	India	2349-0578	2349-0896	Teertha
4	Advanced Journal of Emergency Me...	Medical Scie...	República Isl...	2588-400X		Tehran
5	Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathol...	Pathology		7853-1292		Advanc
6	Advanced Journal of Medicine and Pharm...	Pharmacy an...	Hong Kong (...)	2313-7479		Bairen I
7	African Journal of Traditional, Compl...	Medical Scie...	Nigeria	0189-6016		D R P L
8	Aging	Obstetrics a...	EEUU	1945-4589		Impact
9	Asian and Australasian Journal of Neurology	Neurology	EEUU	2221-2222	2221-2224	Decker



Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathology	
TITLE	Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathology
SUBJECT	Pathology
COUNTRY	
ISSN	7853-1292
EISSN	
PUBLISHER	Advanced Scholars Journals
URL	http://advancedscholarsjournals.org/journal/ajsp
MEDLINE ID	



4-. **Search by subject:** users can search journals by subject by using filters or grouping by field, in the field "Subject".

Airtable

Hide fields Filter Group Sort

	Title	Subject	Country	ISSN	EISSN	Publisher
1	Academic Journal of Pediatrics & Ne...			2474-1700		Juniper Publish...
2	Acta Kinesiologica			1840-2976	1840-6700	Drustvo Pedago...
3	Acta Medica International			2349-0578	2349-0896	Teerthankar Ma...
4	Advanced Journal of Emergency Me...			2588-400X		Shiraz Universit...
5	Advanced Journal of Surgical Pathol...			7853-1292		Advanced Scho...
6	Advances in Biomedicine and Pharm...	Pharmacy an...	Hong Kong (...)	2313-7479		Bairen Int'l Ente...
7	African Journal of Traditional, Compl...	Medical Scie...	Nigeria	0190-8076		D R P U, Faculty ...
8	Aging	Obstetrics a...	EEUU	1945-4589		Impact Journals ...
9	Aging and neurodegeneration	Neurology	EEUU	2331-2432	2331-2424	Research Publis...
10	Al Ameen Journal of Medical Sciences	Medical Scie...	India	0974-1143		Scientific and R...
11	American Journal of Advanced Drug...	Pharmacy an...	EEUU	2321-547X		Insight Medical ...
12	American Journal of Advances in Me...	Medical Scie...	India	2347-2766		Ingenious Know...
13	American Journal of Clinical Neurolo...	Neurology	EEUU	2471-7231	2471-724X	Public Science P...
14	American Journal of Dermatology a...	Dermatology	EEUU	2332-8487	2332-8479	Scientific and A...
15	American Journal of Neurodegenera...	Neurology	EEUU	2165-591X		e-Century Publ...
16	American Journal of Neuroscience	Neurology	Emiratos Àra...	1948-9900		Science Publicat...
17	American Journal of Pharmacy and ...	Pharmacy an...	India	2321-3647		Jitendra S. Patel
18	American Journal of Phytomedicine ...	Medical Scie...	EEUU	2321-2748		Insight Medical ...

Airtable

Grid view

Hide fields Filter Grouped by 1 field Sort

	Title	Group by	Subject	Country	ISSN	EISSN	Publisher	URL	Medline	Clarivate	Journal Catio...	Sci	WOS
2	International Jour...	X Group by	Subject	India	2321-1543		Alanya Ayurved...	http://www.a...	No	No	No	No	No
3	International Jour...	Pick another field to group by	Subject	India	2436-1110		Charaka Publica...	http://www.c...	No	No	No	No	No
4	International Jour...		Subject	India	2436-1110		Charaka Publica...	http://www.c...	No	No	No	No	No
5	Journal of Ayurveda and Holistic Me...		Alternative ...	India	2321-1543		Alanya Ayurved...	http://www.a...	No	No	No	No	No
6	Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated ...		Alternative ...	India	2436-1110		Charaka Publica...	http://www.c...	No	No	No	No	No
SUBJECT: Anatomy and Morphology Count: 1													
7	Journal of Research in Human Anato...		Anatomy an...	India	2436-0731		Alkshantala Eri...	http://www.a...	No	No	No	No	No
SUBJECT: Anesthesiology Count: 1													
8	Journal of Research in Anesthesiol...		Anesthesiol...	India	2436-0685		Alkshantala Eri...	http://www.a...	No	No	No	No	No
SUBJECT: Cardiology Count: 3													
9	Cardiology and Cardiovascular Medi...		Cardiology	EEUU	2972-9292			http://www.c...	No	No	No	No	No
10	Experimental and Clinical Cardiology		Cardiology	Canada / Su...	1235-6626	1918-1515	Pulsus Group / ...	http://www.c...	No	No	No	No	No
11	Oncotarget		Cardiology	EEUU	1940-2653		Impact journals ...	http://www.a...	No	No	No	No	No

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