

Conflicts of Interest in Research across Scholarly Disciplines:

Cross-sectional study and qualitative content analysis of policies

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No Conflict of Interest to Declare.

Conflicts of Interest: Definitions

a set of circumstances that creates **a risk** that professional judgment or actions regarding **a primary interest** (integrity in research) will be **unduly influenced** by a **secondary interest**

Institute of Medicine Report, 2009

a collision between **a duty** (office/position/ work-related duty) and **a tangible or intangible** interest, where the duty vs. interest collision tempts the person concerned to disregard their duty and constitutes **a threat** to the interest of someone else

Villarán A, 2020

Conflicts of Interest in Research

A comparison of policy provisions for managing “financial” and “non-financial” interests across health-related research organizations: A qualitative content analysis Grundy, 2020.

Why Having a (Nonfinancial) Interest Is Not a Conflict of Interest Bero, 2016.

Mapping conflict of interests: scoping review Chimonas, 2021.

Conflicts of Interest at Medical Journals: The Influence of Industry-Supported Randomised Trials on Journal Impact Factors and Revenue – Cohort Study Lundh, 2010.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST
IN MEDICAL RESEARCH,
EDUCATION, AND PRACTICE**

IoM, 2009.

Inevitable.

Not per se unethical

.....if properly disclosed and managed.

Proper disclosure/management strategies?

Not exclusive to medicine:

Conflicts of Interest in Research

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Can you believe what you read?

Scientists’ financial interests they write, studies suggest Frank van Kolschooten 2002.

Implementation Of Financial Disclosure Policies To Manage Conflicts Of Interest Boyd, 2004.

Conflicts of Interest at Medical Journals: The Influence of Industry-Supported Randomised Trials on Journal Impact Factors and Revenue – Cohort Study Lundh, 2010.

Mapping conflict of interests: scoping review Chimonas, 2021.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN MEDICAL RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND PRACTICE

IoM, 2009.

A comparison of conflict of interest policies at peer-reviewed journals in different scientific disciplines Ancker, 2007.

Conflicts of Interest in Academic Research: Policies, Processes, and Attitudes Lipton, 2010.

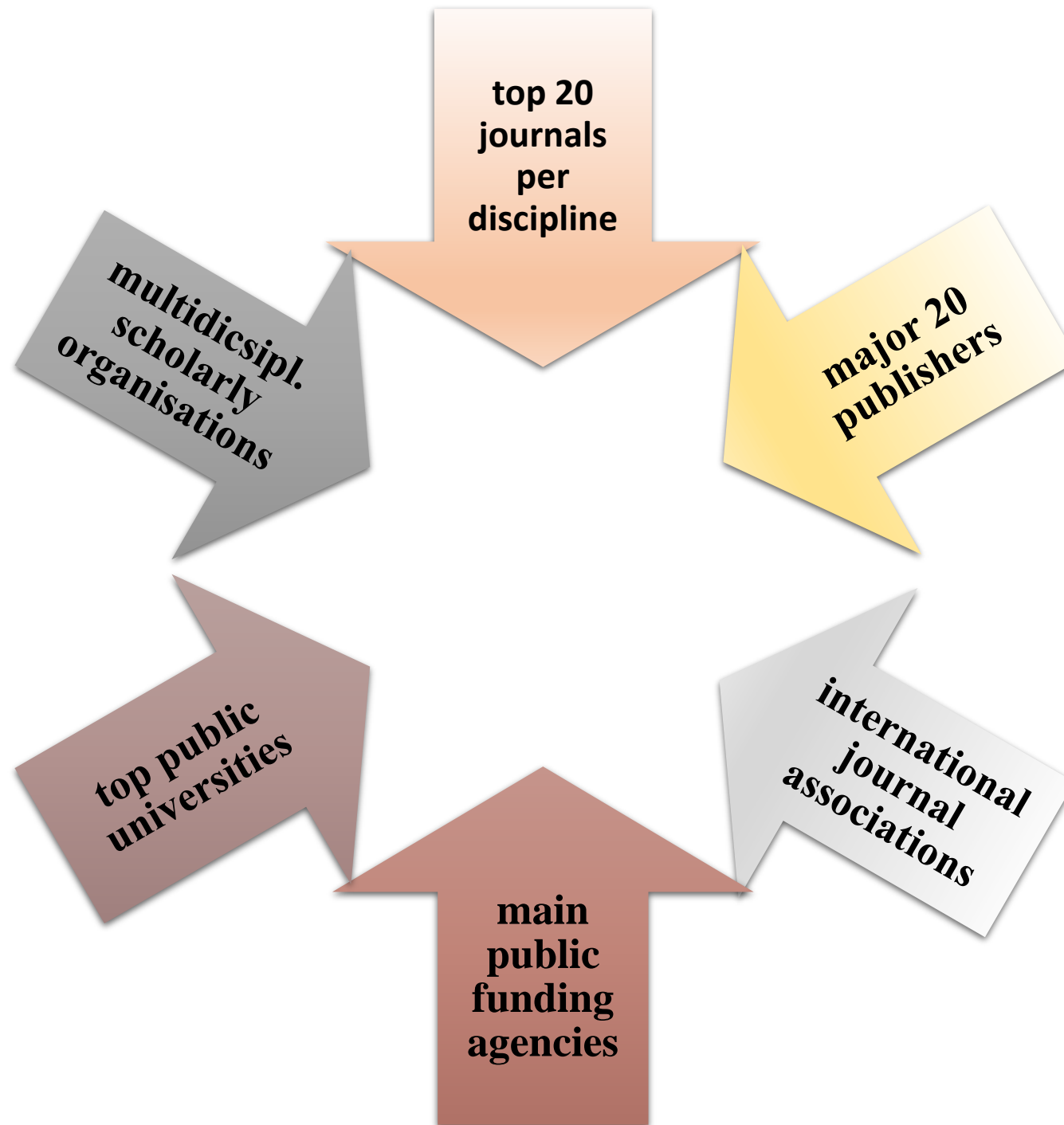
Aim & Objectives

investigate how conflicts of interest in research are addressed across scholarly disciplines:
economics, engineering, environmental toxicology, law, medicine

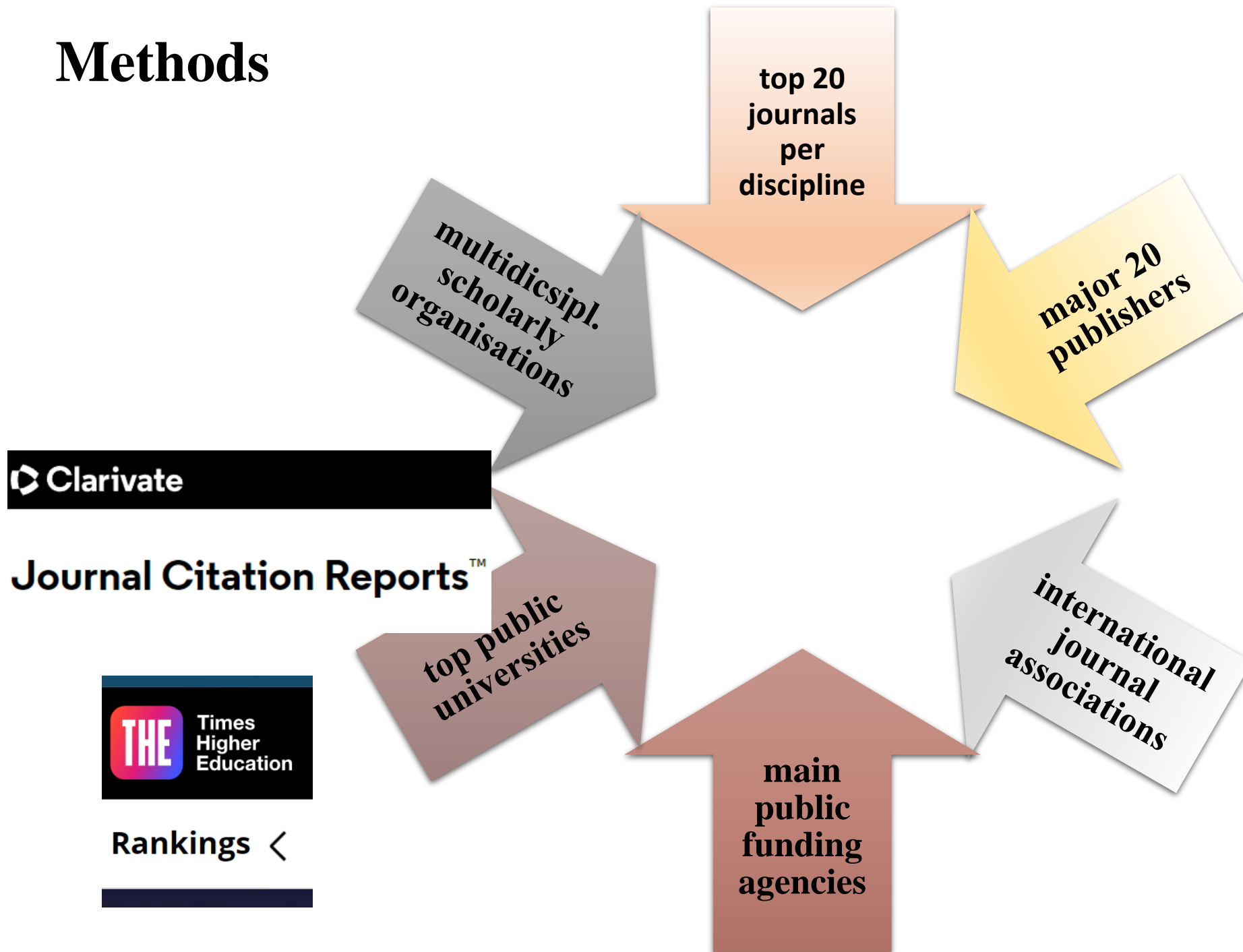
- i. Definitions of conflict of interest
- ii. Types of interests potentially resulting in conflicts of interest.
- iii. Disclosure.
- iv. Management.
- v. Cross-disciplinary commonalities and differences.
- ? Better fit-for-purpose strategies

Methods

Economics
Engineering
Env. Toxicology
Law
Medicine



Methods



 Clarivate

Journal Citation Reports™



Rankings <

Methods: Triangulation

“Your query has been forwarded to the Editor.” (...)

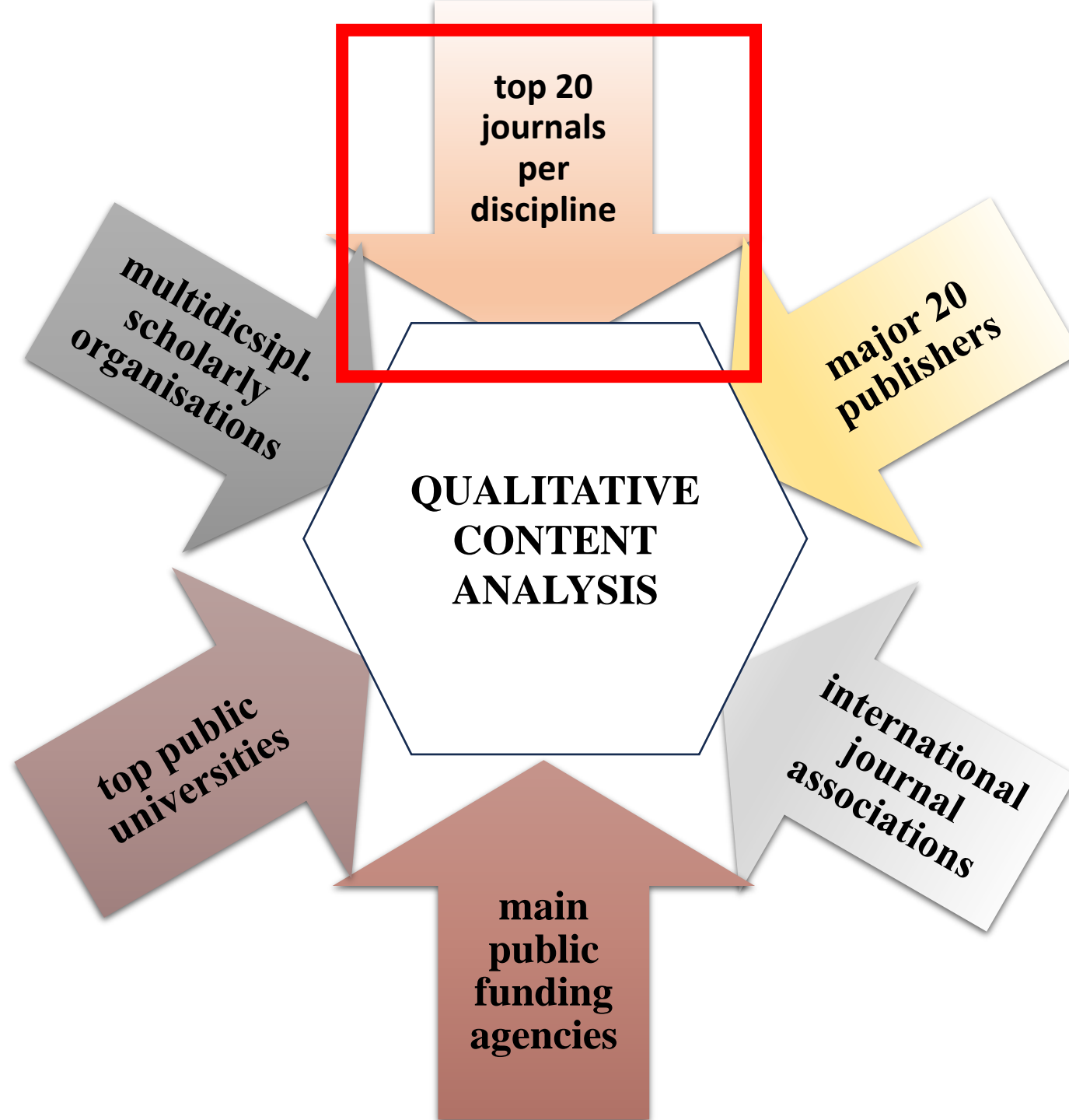
“Unfortunately, the organisation is not taking inquiries at this time.”

“Please kindly find all the information on the Journal’s website.”

Methods



Methods



Results: Publishers' Influence on Journals' CoI Policies

Journals (N = 100)

Only publisher's policies 54%

Journal's* and publisher's policies 14%

Only journals' policies* 32%

** including journal's internal policies*

Results: Publishers' Influence on Journals' Policies

Strictly unifying publisher's policy

Taylor and Francis, Nature Portfolio, Annual Reviews

Harmonizing effect of publisher's policy ("aligned with"):

Elsevier - One Earth

Subsidiarity of publisher's policy:

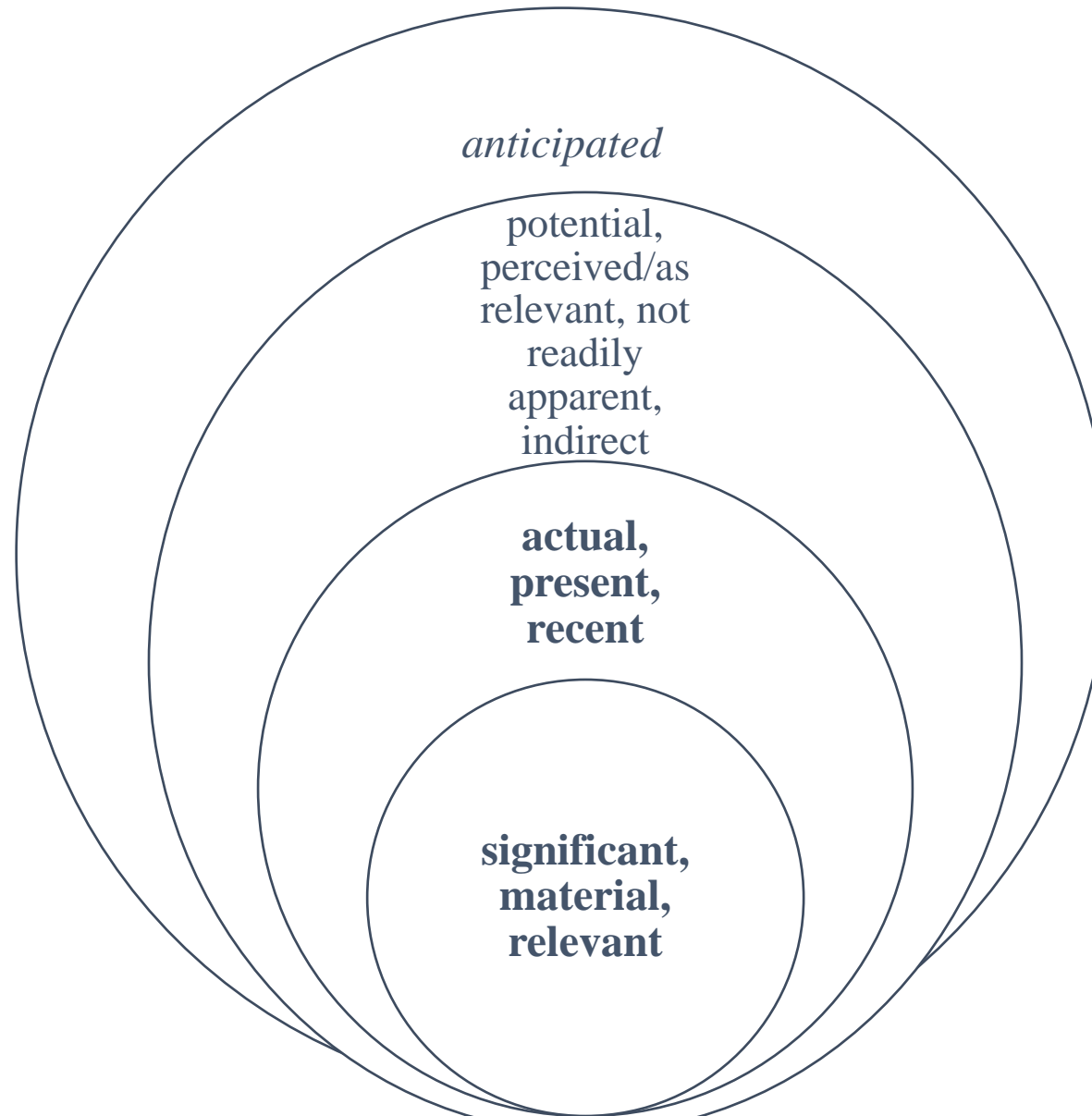
Wiley - Comprehensive Reviews in Food Science and Food Safety

Diversity (law, economics)

Oxford Academic - Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Environmental Law

Non-Compliance (request for anonymity)

Results: Range of Interests Subjected to Journals' Policies



Results: Types of Interests Targetted by Journals' Policies

Stakeholders

authors

financial (conflicts of) interests

Comprehens. Rev. in Food Science and Food Safety

all conflicts of/competing interests/ interests

reviewers, editors

relationships towards authors, manuscripts

Review of Financial Studies

all conflicts of/competing interests/ interests

Financial tresholds

subjective criterion

“any undeclared competing financial interests that could embarrass you were they to become publicly known after your work was published”

Nature Portfolio

objective criterion

financial support summing to at least US\$10,000

in the past three years

Econometrica

Results: Fit-for-purpose disclosure, management and enforcement strategies in Journals' Policies?

Authors Conflicts of interest

Disclosure. No management, no enforcement.

Energy policy

Disclosure → ?

“The disclosure MAY be published with the article.”
Transnational Environmental Law

Disclosure + preventive management

“We do not...publish pieces for which the author was paid taxable income by an organization other than the relevant employer” *Stanford Law Review*

Disclosure + enforcement of disclosure.

No management.

revocation of acceptance: *Yale Law Review*,

authors correction: *Advances in Optics and Photonics*

journal erratum: *Annual Reviews*

retraction: *Taylor and Francis*

Reviewers/Editors Conflicts of Interest

Disclosure → management

another editor, reviewer assigned

No disclosure. Management of reviewer's conflicts of interests

IEEE Communications Surveys and Tutorials

Conclusion: Conflict of Interest in Journals' Policies

= to significant extent: conflict of interest in publishers' policies

fragmental, hard to navigate (even for journals themselves)

diverse (legal and economics journals)

reflecting on current debates:

having a “non-financial conflict of interest”: having other interests/relationship, professional, personal, or business concerns, outside activities

Bero L. PLoS Biol 2016

Questions?

Thank you for your attention.



QR Code to the study's protocol