

Inclusion of the *Journal of Health and Social Sciences* in Scopus: Great honour and satisfaction, but the most exciting part is still to come

Francesco CHIRICO^{1,2}

Affiliations:

¹ M.D., Contract Professor, Health Service Department, State Police, Ministry of Interior, Italy.

² Post-Graduate Specialization School of Occupational Health, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma, Italy.

Corresponding author:

Dr. Francesco Chirico, Via Umberto Cagni, 21, 20162 Milan, Italy. E-mail: medlavchirico@gmail.com

On the evening of 16 March 2021, I received an email from the Scopus Title Evaluation Team stating, ‘The title (Journal of Health and Social Sciences) has been evaluated for inclusion by the Content Selection & Advisory Board (CSAB). The review of this title is now complete and the CSAB had advised that the title will be accepted for inclusion in Scopus’.

I am incredibly proud of this result, and I wish to share this announcement with the readers, editors and reviewers of the journal. Without their contributions, it would have been impossible to be accepted by the Scopus CSAB. I would like to extend my thanks to our publisher, *Edizioni FS*, for believing in me 5 years ago, when, with a group of brave friends, I started this difficult journey. I would also like to thank all the authors for trusting us with their work over the years. Specifically, I must thank the journal’s co-founder and the owner

of *Edizioni FS*, Dr Giuseppe Ferrari, for his confidence in me and in my project, as well as Dr Gabriella Nucera, my partner in editing and in life, for supporting and inspiring me through this journey.

One year after its launch, the *Journal of Health and Social Sciences (JHSS)* was added to the Directory Open Access Journal (DOAJ), on 12 July 2017 [1]. The *JHSS* was conceived as a full, free of charge, open access journal, focusing on the ‘global’ concept of health, in accordance with the WHO’s health definition. *JHSS* is the official publication of the *Italian Society of Integrative Psychotherapy for Social Development*, and it was established with the sentiment ‘science in society and science for society’. Our association includes a group of scholars from different disciplines, and it is willing to cooperate with other scientific associations. We believe international scientific collaboration and open access science may

KEY WORDS: Academic publishing; DOAJ; editorial policies; indexes; medicine; psychology; open access publishing; peer review, research; public health; social development, Scopus.

contribute to the knowledge, progress, peace and social development of all the people [2]. We established a forum where academics, practitioners and scholars from developed and developing countries can meet and share their research findings with policymakers, politicians, and organisations to overcome health inequalities and convert research into political action [1]. I believe international collaboration is key to the advancement of knowledge and open science and to contrast scientific nationalism's focus on economic competitiveness and nation-building [3].

On 22 December 2018, our first application to Scopus was rejected with the request of some revisions. The title was considered 'very broad, bland and generic', and it was advised to adopt a specific title or subtitle 'to give much greater clarity to the target audience and content'.

For this reason, we launched in 2019 the subtitle '*The Italian Journal for Interdisciplinary Health and Social Development*' to give greater emphasis to the SIPISS' perspective and greater clarity to the target audience and content, which concerns a broad and interdisciplinary view on public health by drawing on medicine, psychology and the sociology of health contributions. We believe public health is indeed the ideal arena wherein advancements in health research can translate into social development [1].

The Scopus CSAB observed, 'The journal is currently only publishing around 20 items per annum, with limited citation metrics, and it will take a considerable time to develop the

quality and quantity of content'. Over the next three years, after the first application to Scopus, the publication trend of our journal grew. In 2020, we stepped up from three issues per year to a quarterly publication. Furthermore, we established an Advance Online Publication system to increase the number of submissions and improve the citation trend of the published papers. Consequently, this led to an improvement in the quantity and quality of content. During the period of the first evaluation (2016–2018), the average number of published items was 26 (2016 = 24; 2017 = 25; 2018 = 25). In the subsequent years (2019–2020), the average number of published items was 40 (2019 = 31; 2020 = 49). Concerning the content quality, the rate of acceptance decreased from 40% (2018) to 17.8% (2020). Table 1 shows this growing trend.

Finally, the SCOPUS CSAB observed, 'The current advisory boards are disproportionately large to size of the journal, and board members might be encouraged to generate more content flow'. Therefore, the editorial board was restructured over the years, with the introduction of new editorial roles (such as Deputy Editor, Associate Editors, Honorary Associate Editors, Section Editors, etc.), by distinguishing the Board in an Editorial Board and an Editorial Advisory Board. We enrolled highly qualified editors, and many editorial board members have contributed with original papers or editorials over the years (see Table 2).

Since 10 November 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to apply a small ar-

Competing interests - none declared.

Copyright © 2021 Francesco Chirico Edizioni FS Publishers

This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. See <http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Cite this article as: Chirico F. Inclusion of the Journal of Health and Social Sciences in Scopus: Great honour and satisfaction, but the most exciting part is still to come. *J Health Soc Sci.* 2021;6(1):9-12

DOI 10.19204/2021/ncls1

Received: 19/03/2021

Accepted: 20/03/2021

Published Online: 21/03/2021

Table 1. The publication trend of the *Journal of Health and Social Sciences* (2016-2020 years).

Year	N (Editorials/Book Reviews)	N (Viewpoints/Commentaries/ Images in Medicine)	N (Original Articles/Case Reports/Reviews)	Total Item Published
2016	5	8	16	29
2017	3	1	21	25
2018	4	2	19	25
2019	5	2	24	31
2020	3	12	34	49

Table 2. The contributions authored by *JHSS*' editorial board members (2016-2020 years).

Year	Number of board members who authored editorials	Number of board members who authored other types of articles	Total board members who authored manuscripts for the journal*
2016	2	11	13
2017	1	8	9
2018	1	4	5
2019	5	3	8
2020	4	7	11

*Some authors have published more than one paper in the reference year.

ticle processing charge to authors (79 euros) to cover the production costs. *JHSS* indeed has not received any economic support from public or economic institutions or pharmaceutical companies. On one hand, our editorial policy is free of any political or economic pressure. On the other, *Edizioni FS* is a small international publishing house, and the scientific comparison with major academic publishers is highly challenging. Therefore, we call for cooperation with highly passionate, enthusiastic, competent contributing researchers, who, with their tireless work, may sustain our journal.

For all these reasons, when I received the good news from the Scopus Title Evaluation Team, my happiness was even greater. The final reviewers commented, 'The applicants have responded constructively to the 2018 advisory review. The new subtitle clarifies the purpose of the journal. The website information is well presented. The journal is gradually progressing in terms of the number of publi-

shed articles and of citation activity. There are no obvious contraindications to accession to SCOPUS at this point'.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the reviewers of SCOPUS CSAB and the entire Scopus Title Evaluation Team. It is a great satisfaction for this result and great honour for us for being accepted by such a prestigious index. However, I hope this will be the first of many such occasions, as the most exciting part of our 'scientific' journey is still to come.

Francesco Chirico, MD, Prof
 Post-graduate School of Occupational
 Health, Università Cattolica del Sacro
 Cuore, Roma, Italy

*Co-Editor Founder and Editor in Chief,
 Scientific Director at
 Journal of Health and Social Sciences-
 The Italian Journal for Interdisciplinary Health
 and Social Development*

References

1. Chirico F. Journal of Health and Social Sciences: A reputable, DOAJ-indexed, free, open access journal. J Health Soc Sci. 2019 Mar;4(1):9-12. Doi: 10.19204/2019/jrln1.
2. Chirico F, Ferrari G. Welcome to the Journal of Health and Social Sciences. J Health Soc Sci. 2016;1(1):9-10. doi 10.19204/2016/wlcm1.
3. Lee JJ, Haupt JP. Scientific globalism during a global crisis: research collaboration and open access publications on COVID-19. Higher Education. 2020. In Press. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-020-00589-0>.