

Academic Concern: Identify Predatory Journals Prior to Publication

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Abstract

This article was composed with the goal of identifying predatory journals and making recommendations to aspiring academics. In this course, the author gathered the essential material through deskwork and then utilized descriptive-cum-analytical methods to generalize the findings. This article discusses how to discover predatory and non-predatory journals on Web pages so that careful researchers can publish their scholarly work in the right forum. To provide the necessary explanation, the author employed both descriptive and analytical approaches to information comprehension. According to the study, predatory journals are widely available in the form of open-access journals and online journals, whereas non-predatory publications have well-defined manuscript submission protocols. That is why interested researchers should be aware of whether they are reading the correct journal or a counterfeit. When examining a suspected journal, look for integrity; if the same paper appears in many journals without peer review and there is no editor or editorial board listed on the journal's website at all, Topics covered include the website, publication methods, indexing and metrics, pricing, access and copyright, and commercial activities. This is why this post will be useful for those who want to distinguish between genuine and counterfeit journals.

Keywords: Predatory and non-Predatory Journals, Academic Ethics, Academic

Introduction

"A Predatory journal is a journal that deceptively takes from an author (Musick, 2015)". According to dictionary.com (n.d.), the word predatory was first recorded in 1580-90 and comes from Latin praedatōrius, which means "plundering, marauding". The term "predatory" refers to publications that are self-serving and do not attempt to bring value to the research community or maintain the integrity of scientific literature. Other terms in use include "deceptive" and "pseudo. "Fake",

"illegitimate", "exploitative", "unscrupulous", "scam", "bogus", and no-reputable" journals.

Similarly, dictionary.com (n.d.) states that journals that prey on writers exploit authors by collecting a fee for publication without providing peer review or editing. Some argue that all paid publications are predatory, while others disagree, with a few believing there are various types. Predatory journals, for example, may steal intellectual property through deception, engage in fraudulent or fake peer review, or recruit respected specialists to editorial boards without their knowledge or consent.

Because predatory publishers do not adhere to academic publishing standards, they typically offer a short turnaround time for manuscript publication. Many predatory journals have extremely broad scopes in the hopes of attracting as many authors as possible. Non-predatory journals typically have a much more focused scope, as they wish to cover a single area without spreading themselves too thin. Because predatory journals rarely use rigorous peer review, the average quality of published research is lower than that of properly peer-reviewed papers. Avoiding, bypassing, or reducing the quality assurance stage of peer review can lead to inadequate knowledge generation. There are diversified opinions on this issue, but the below-given definition by Grudniewicz et al. (2019) is taken as a common one. Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices (p.211).

Sometimes you might want to consider publishing in a journal that you and your colleagues are unfamiliar with: perhaps you received an email inviting you to contribute an article (such emails are sent by both reputable and predatory journals), or maybe your paper was rejected and you're looking for a new journal to approach. When determining where to submit, you will need to discern between trustworthy and unscrupulous journals. Simply said, reputable journals include all of the following, while predatory journals do not.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this academic writing is to identify predatory or phony journals. Whereas the specific objectives include:

- i. To identifying predatory and non-predatory journals,
- ii. To recommending non-predatory journals to aspiring academics.

Methodology

The author used qualitative methodologies to enhance this scholarly piece. To conclude this instructional work, the author used descriptive and analytical approaches to information analysis. The majority of the information was obtained from secondary sources, including websites, books, journals, expert opinions and publications, and so on. The author expresses heartfelt gratitude to all owners of the data and material utilized in the analysis and preparation of this article.

Discussion

The proliferation of open access journals and the shift to online publishing have transformed academic publishing dramatically. Authors can now publish their work in more journals than ever before. This benefits writers by providing more routes for publication, but it also increases their obligation to avoid the substantial risk of publishing in a predatory journal.

In this article, the author discusses the characteristics of predatory journals and responds to some common issues posed by authors and participants at our author training seminars. Further, the authors summarise some warning signals of predatory journals and provide links to resources that the researcher hope you will find useful in learning more about this issue.

Identifying Non-Predatory Journal

As explained by Mohapatra (2023, June 06), non-predatory publications go through a thorough peer-review process that involves subject specialists who assess the research's quality, validity, and relevance before publishing. They maintain high editing standards and aim to publish intellectual stuff. Non-predatory journals are those produced by charitable publishers at no cost to authors or readers. Furthermore, the following discussion may help you locate non-predatory journals.

Adequate, Qualified Review. A respected scholarly journal conducts some type of competent and qualified review, whether peer, editorial, or institutional. If a journal does not provide such a review, publishing a paper in it is equivalent to publishing a paper on your website, a pre-print server, or a general magazine. Of course, not all works are designed for peer-reviewed publication; expository articles, textbooks, monographs, and other explanatory resources have their place, but they serve a different purpose. A scholarly journal has undergone adequate and qualified evaluation.

Qualified and Independent Oversight of Editing. An anonymous writer (2023, June 24) emphasized the need for an academic editorial board to rigorously edit any scholar's academic writing. In this regard, the author (2023, June 24) noted: Like the journal's aims and scope, the editorial board should, similarly, be focused on the area that is addressed by the journal if the disciplines and expertise of the editorial board are aligned with the narrow scope of the journal; this is another indicator that the journal is not predatory.

Moreover, reputable academic journals are often founded to meet an unmet demand. To be deemed trustworthy, a journal's editorial board membership must be clearly and accurately stated. The board should include academics who have the necessary competence to understand and assess the papers published by the journal. STM, a trade association for journal publishers, establishes the notion of qualified and independent editorial oversight (divided into two parts: accuracy and independence) for publishers in its International Ethical Principles for Scholarly Publication.

Transparent fees, procedures, and guidelines: A respected journal will clearly and transparently state all fees, methods, and policies on its website, ensuring that they adhere to the most recent ethical research and publication norms. If such material is missing or difficult to obtain, it is a red flag that you should investigate the journal's credibility further.

Acceptance by respected scholarly organizations: Reputable journals are included in big, trusted scholarly databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, MEDLINE (for biomedical research), the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA), and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Having ranked indicates that the journals have undergone a quality assessment process. Lack of inclusion in a repository does not always indicate that a journal is predatory (a new journal is not eligible for listing right away), and some papers from predatory journals have seeped into well-known repositories such as Pub Med Central and Scopus. As a result, knowing if a publication is indexed is only one step in determining whether it is reputable or predatory. The author urges that you visit the COPE website for additional information on the roles of journals and publishers.

There are enough active predatory journals for major funders and organizations to issue advice on how their researchers can avoid publishing in predatory journals, as well as any penalties for doing so; for example, newly

announced policy documents in China state that researchers will face severe punishment for publishing in journals deemed predatory.

In July 2015, "Beall's List" had 671 journals and 811 publishers. This list was compiled by Jeffrey Beall, an associate professor at the University of Colorado Denver, who focused on one group of abusers: open-access journals and publishers. Beall's list went inactive in January 2017. In this regard, Musick, C. (2020, July) has claimed:

The same year, Cabell's International established two lists: a list of predatory journals, now named "Predatory Reports," with criteria available online, and a curated list of trustworthy journals, now called "Journalistic." Both require a subscription for access. The number of predatory journals currently exceeds 12,000.

Furthermore, Yatawara (n.d.) claimed that predatory journals and publishers exist to mislead the scientific community, and they invest a significant amount of time and effort in devising new and novel methods to do so. Still, looking for a few warning signals can help you recognize them. Multiple warning indications, rather than a single warning sign, usually indicate a journal's predatory nature, and we must still use our judgment after considering all of the material we discover. Here are several telltale symptoms of a predatory journal. Is included under "Predatory Reports" by Cabell's International? Is not indexed in large, trusted databases of scholarly work, has many mistakes in English (or the target language) on the journal's website. There are several typos in English (or the intended language) on the journal's website. Even the greatest of us sometimes make mistakes, but if the editors of a journal are unable to write fluently in the language in which the journal is published, it appears that they are unqualified to edit that publication. It should be noted that the degree of language in journal articles varies: some journals are particularly concerned with good language, while others are more concerned with scientific concepts than with entirely flawless English presentation.

Moreover, the journal's website and/or author guidelines do not provide clear and transparent information on processes and fees, some predatory journals do not specify processes or fees on their website, hoping that an email soliciting a paper will be sufficient to elicit a submission from you. Reputable journals state their processes and fees clearly and transparently on their websites; therefore, if a journal does not do this or, conversely, places an excessive emphasis on payment policies when communicating with you, it may indicate that the journal's primary goal is to receive

payments rather than publish quality scientific work. Keep in mind that respected journals frequently have higher APCs because they incur more expenses than predatory journals, so always examine the value.

A predatory journal promotes ISSN (International Standard Serial Number referring [The ISSN]) or false metrics as an indication of quality. Any publisher in an ISSN member country may obtain an ISSN by applying and meeting the conditions. The ISSN is merely an identifier, not a measure of quality. The ISSN regulating body claims that it is a digital code without intrinsic significance and does not guarantee the quality or validity of the contents. Furthermore, some predatory journals misrepresent their impact factor or provide false metrics that are not used by respectable journals and publishers.

Likewise, it has an undercover editorial board. Whereas, reputable journals will publish a list of editorial board members and their affiliations with clear information. If you are dubious about any of them, this allows you to contact them personally to verify their affiliation with the journal.

Table 1

Comparisons between non-predatory and predatory journal

S. No.	Factors	Non-predatory Journal	Predatory Journal
1	Submission charge	Free	Paid
2	Processing Charge	Free	Paid
3	Copyright	With authors	With Publishers
4	Subscription charge	Free open access	Paid subscription
5	Time delay	Minimum	Long waiting
6	Availability	Online open access copy	Printed copy
7	Review (Free/Paid)	No payment to reviewer	No payment to reviewer
8	Profit	Not profit motivated	Profit motivated

(Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=non-++predatory+meaning&tbm=isch&ved>)

A predatory journal has a journal name, URL, and/or branding that is very similar to a credible publication some hijacked journals attempt to persuade authors to donate to them by making their journal appear very similar to a legitimate one. Please double-check the journal details before submitting. For this purpose, please visit <https://beallslist.net/>. You will find over 1350 predatory journals worldwide, so make sure you are submitting your valuable articles to non-predatory journals rather than predatory ones. A few Predatory Journals listed in Beall's list are:

Academia Scholarly Journals (ASJ), Academic Journals Online (AJO), Academic Research Publishing Group, Advanced Technology &

Science (ATScience), American Journal, American Research Institute for Policy Development, British Association of Academic Research (BAAR), British Journal, Cyber Journals, The European Scientific Community, Gratis Open Access Publishers, Human Resource Management Academic Research Society (HRMARS),

The Institute for Business and Finance Research (IBFR), International Journal of College & University (IJCU), International Journal of Research & Development Organization (IJRDO), International Journal Publishers Group, The International Journal Research Publications (TIJ Research Publications), International Journals (Yadav Scientific Journals Publishers), International Journals.co.in, International Journals for Research (IJR), International Journals for Research (IJR Group), International Journals for Researchers, International Journal of Academic Research (Publisher), International Journals of Engineering & Sciences, International Journals of Multi Dimensional Research, International Journals of Multidisciplinary Research Academy, International Journals of N&N Global Technology (IJNNGT), International Journals of Research (INTJR), International Journals of Research Papers (IJRP), International Journals of Sciences and High Technologies (IJSHT), International Journals of Scientific Knowledge (IJSK), International Journals of Scientific Research Publications (IJSRPUB), International Journals of Scientific Research (IJSR), ..., Zenith International Research and Academic Foundation (ZIRAF) and many more.

Predatory Publishers' Lists

Opponents of Open Access Publishing do exist. Those who oppose open access frequently use the presence of unscrupulous publishers and nefarious rights agreements to malign and undermine the principles and movement. Scholars are advised by librarians and intellectual property managers to thoroughly review and evaluate deposit and submission agreements, regardless of whether they are published in traditional or open-access settings. Two resources are provided to facilitate the discussion:

Beall's List of Publishers Who Are Predators

A comprehensive list of Open Access journals and repositories that are considered harmful or predatory is published by Scholarly Open Access. Beyond Beall's list too a deeper comprehension of unscrupulous publishers is available.

An article for College and Research Libraries News addresses the ongoing need to inform academics and researchers about Open Access resources, as well as the

active role that libraries play in identifying, locating, and blacklisting predatory publishers.

Tactic How to Recognize

Flattering email to invite you to submit an article or serve on the editorial board of a "scholarly" journal

Solicitation Suspect journals aggressively solicit scholars to submit papers. The solicitation may come as spam or individual emails. Legitimate journals usually **do not solicit** authors but instead have the authors contact them. The journal agrees to publish your article for a fee before reviewing it. Asked whom you would like to review your work.

Lack of clear instructions to authors

lack of transparency or policies about fees related to publishing

Article Article processing fees look below that of reputable open access
Processing journals

and Peer Peer review process is not clearly explained

Review Peer review seems to be extremely fast (i.e., days) - may be non-existent

Articles are to be submitted via email (some predatory publishers use legitimate editorial manager systems - it doesn't make them legitimate)

Be wary of journals that cite bogus impact factors, such as the GIF (Global Impact Factor), Index Copernicus Value, Cite factor, or the UIF (Universal Impact Factor). Some may falsify legitimate impact factors. Impact Factors can be verified via Web of Science, Dimensions or Google.

Impact
Factors

Members of the editorial board lack qualifications in the field.

Different journals by the same publisher have the same editorial board.

Editorial Predatory journals will sometimes solicit well-known scholars to join
Board their boards in order to lend credibility to their journal but don't let
them make decisions. (How you would make this discovery even with
good due diligence is hard to imagine.)

Listing academics as members of editorial boards without their permission and not allowing academics to resign from editorial boards.

Metrics No ISSN, no DOI

- and Indexing** Invented or fake metrics (sounding similar to established metrics used by reputable journals)
Impact Factor can't be verified in Journal Citation Reports
Falsely claimed to be indexed, e.g., in DOAJ
Not listed in reputable sources such as Ulrich's Periodical Directory
The journal is not indexed in the major indexes in the field as well as general indexes, even though it might claim to be.
Some journals falsely claim to be indexed by Thomson Reuters.
- Watch lists** The journal is listed on Beall's List of Predatory Journals, Cabell's Predatory Journals list, or other watchlist.
The journal is difficult to locate in library catalogs, i.e. few major libraries subscribe to it.
The scope is overly broad and/or does not fit well with your research.
- Other Factors** Publication frequency is irregular or not stated.
May have the same or similar name to a legitimate journal. The former is characteristic of hijacked journals.
The email address is often non-professional, e.g., (@yahoo.com, aol.com or @gmail.com).
(Source: https://libguides.d.umn.edu/scholarly_publishing/predatory)

Conclusion

Academic publishing is fundamentally dependent on the honesty of the system those taking part: publishers must support their journals' editors; journal employees must thoroughly examine accepted manuscripts, convey clearly with authors, and perform their pledged services; peer reviewers must review properly and for trustworthy journals; and authors must provide ethically done study that is free of plagiarism and other violations of ethical standards. When some parties act in an unethical difficulties occur, such as predatory publishing. This article will help all concerned and make you more aware of the factors to consider when selecting a magazine and publisher, whether for yourself or your students.

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