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Predatory Journals: Threat for Academicians

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Abstract

The publication journey for most of the researchers starts from the Ph. D. onwards. University guidelines for the Ph. D. enable the researchers to publish one or two papers in peer-reviewed journals. The inexperienced or young researchers are in a hurry in the process of publishing their articles. They are unaware of the predatory journals and they publish their articles in these predatory journals. The focus of the present paper is to create awareness among the young researchers and offer some basic knowledge so that they can avoid publishing in predatory journals.

Keywords: Predatory Journals, Predatory publishers, Inexperienced authors, Publishing, Research credibility.

Introduction:

Predatory is the issue discussed from 2011 onwards. In the year 2008 Jeffrey Beall coined the term predatory journals and started awareness about these predatory journals by creating a Beall list. With the advent of the internet open access publishing concept came in to existence

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and so as the rise in open access publishing. Predatory journal is an open access publishing model where publisher charges publication fees from the authors. There is an absence of peer-review committee with these types of journals. Now it has become a worldwide phenomenon which affects the authors and their research credibility. These predatory publishers use Global, International words in their journal title. Mostly they term themselves as interdisciplinary research journal with high impact factor and indexed in many databases. They don't have the publication frequency. They provide false and misleading information about editorial board, membership with various indexing associations and about their peer review process. In spite the journals are new they publish the impact factor on their webpage when impact factor is calculated for two years to show the impact of the journal. Predatory journals don't specify a creative common licence for an open access journal. Mostly these journals claim as International Peer-review journals with high impact factor and indexing. Mostly the articles published in predatory journals are open access with no peer-review process or very little review with low academic standards. Predatory journals accept many articles in the volumes which generates revenue for them. The academicians publish the articles in these journals to meet their academic requirements for career progression or for the purpose of article count. Predatory journals are creating harm to the academicians. The predatory journal acceptance rate remains very high and quick publication. They never mention APC (Article processing charges) on their website and once article is accepted, they demand for the article processing charges. Print journals are having a limit about page numbers and number of quality manuscripts to printed in journal, wherein these predatory online journals publish as many as manuscripts in their issue.

Literature Review:

Jeffrey Bell (2015) opines that the predatory publishers and conferences use a phoney or ineffective peer review procedure, allowing low-quality research to become part of the scholarly record. He feels that the author-pay model has created a structural change in scholarly publishing which brought a negative effects and competitions among the predatory journals and has brought down the author fees for publishing these bogus journals. He suggests a quality of a journal should be a criterion for academic evaluation.

Clark and Thompson (2016) cited five reasons in their paper why the authors or researchers publish their articles in predatory journals. They believe that authors are unconcerned about

their public image, that authors do not believe in themselves or their work, that publication numbers are the most important factor, that authors are uninterested in reading about journal credibility, and that authors have given up on sacrificing with predatory journals.

Eriksson and Helgesson (2017) suggests distinguishing of the deceptive and low-quality journals. They show that deceptive journals deceive authors, readers, and institutions by providing false information about critical evaluation, peer review, editorial board, impact factor, indexing, and other factors, as well as including well-known researcher names in their editorial board without their permission.

Memon (2018) in his study reveals that the most of the authors from developing countries publish in predatory journals because of lack of finding, support and training. He suggests to train the young researchers, so that they can deal with predatory publishing situations.

Memon (2018) Predatory journals and publishers are generally based in poor nations, and they use various strategies to target inexperienced researchers from these nations. These authors fall prey to these predatory publishers, and their publications are published in predatory journals.

Ritching et al., (2018) suggest young and inexperienced authors who publish in a predatory journal must be aware of their credibility which damages their reputation. Lack of inadequate peer review process and risk of unprofitable journals would be closed in resulting in loss of all published research papers in that journal. They also feel that the rise of open access movement of publishing articles online has increased the number of publishers and journals that has exploited the open access model.

Kurt (2018) chosen 50 journals from the Beall's list and examined 300 articles, why authors publish in predatory journals and found that the researchers may unconcerned about the quality of journal and they are attempting to publish more papers in predatory journals for promotion purpose. the author also feels that the researchers avoid peer-review process so that they can make their name more quickly and easily. The results of the study indicates that many scholars are unaware of the research methodology and ethics and they are insufficiently trained and suggest that there is a need to provide them knowledge and skills to write and publish in high quality journals.

Demir (2018) examined 24840 articles published in 832 journals in the year 2017. The journals were selected from Beall's list. The study found that some authors published their articles in

same or different journals more than once. No addresses of 97 journals were found out of 832 journals and 119 journals provided incorrect addresses.

Grudniewicz et al., (2019) finds that it is difficult to distinguish a predatory journal from under resourced journal. They claim that the predatory journals are of self-interest in related to financial and they present themselves to false and misleading information.

Vakil (2019) feels that in publish or perish academic culture, the authors who doesn't have a knowledge about predatory journals, succumb to these dubious journals and then valuable published work held as hostage in these non-credible journals.

Why authors publish in predatory journals?

When the researcher's manuscript is rejected by the reputed publishers, they get the negative feedback that their contents or outputs are not up to the mark or findings expected by the reputed journals after regular submissions and due to their inexperience in finding the right journal for their publications they publish in predatory journals. It is also difficult for the inexperienced authors to find which journal is authenticate and which journal is predatory and they publish in these non-credible journals. scientific community most suffers from this who publishes in these predatory journals.

In Indian scenario the UGC (University Grant Commission) grants high credit for the articles published in high impact factor journals and this has may led inexperienced authors to publish their articles in these predatory journals which shows high impact factor. The authors who feel to increase their curricular vitae publishes in these journals. These predatory journals falsely claims that they have highly reputed experts on their editorial board.

The reasons inexperienced author publishes in predatory journals.

- Lack of supervision and guidance
- Lack of information about integrity
- For article counts
- Publish or perish: quantity of paper shall be more than the quality of paper
- Emails from predatory publishers to publish in high impact factor journal and fast review process
- Authors need quick and easy scholarly publishing
- The Giant publishers' charges high article publication charges which is unaffordable for the medium or lower income group authors.

How to avoid publishing in predatory journals:

- Check the Beall's list of predatory journals before submitting your manuscript to that journal
- Check the website of original journal
- Check the credibility of the journal
- Check Similar names of journal
- Don't pay the publication charges
- Never sign the copyright agreement
- The predatory journals website is poorly maintained and sometime founds with grammatical error and spelling mistakes
- Check the address which remains most of the time fake.
- Check the information provided regarding editor or reviewer board
- No geographical diversity among members of international journal.
- Mostly no digital preservation
- Author guidelines copied from other publishers' website with minor changes

Tips about Predatory publishers

- They publish the papers in huge numbers
- They use International, Global or Multidisciplinary words in their titles
- They claim their journal is having high impact factor in Global Impact Factor, Index Copernicus, Scientific journal impact factor etc.
- They falsely claim their journal are indexed in DOAJ, EBSCO, Scopus etc.
- They send the emails via Gmail, yahoo for call of papers in their forthcoming issue
- They don't display APC (Article processing Charges) on home page but they charge hidden APC

Tips about Predatory journals

- No peer review process for the submitted article
- Emails sent to the large number of individuals to attract them for paper presentation
- Publication fees are only disclosed after the article is accepted.
- Mostly the fake editors
- These journals provide fake impact factor to attract the paper submission
- No valid contact information such as telephone numbers, address etc.

- The journals cover almost all the fields and call as multidisciplinary journals.
- Publication ethics are not followed. Sometimes simply a logo of cope is found on their website
- The articles published are found of poorly content with several grammatical errors since they didn't follow the peer review process.
- The professional journals follow standard manuscript submission system while predatory journals recommend to submit by email.
- The editors or reviewers of standard journals investigates the article written by other researchers in their relevant field and compares with the current article and finds whether it is to be published or reject of poorly contents or plagiarism.

Conclusion

The researchers are unaware of the research methodology and ethics. The articles published in predatory journal creates a harm and it will be a demerit for the authors during the time of career progression. The researcher has to aware of publisher's website. They also need to aware of the emails which they receive in their inbox from predatory publishers which assures quick publication of their articles. The researchers need to be made aware of predatory journals, how to identifying the predatory journals and negative impact of publishing in such journals. If the predatory journal disappeared over the internet, then it will be a huge loss for researchers. So there is need to train the researchers and provide them knowledge and skills to publish in reputed journals.

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