

Predatory Publishing

Library Guide



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Hundreds of new open-access journals are published every year by reputable publishers, scientific organizations, and academic institutions. However, it has been observed that alongside these legitimate publishers, a small number of open-access publications claim to be legitimate scholarly journals while misrepresenting their publishing practices. Consequently, a small proportion of the research community is misled into submitting their work to journals that lack appropriate quality-control mechanisms or rigorous peer-review processes and are driven primarily by profit.



Source: Illustration by David Parkins

Predatory Publishing

"Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship. They are characterised by false or misleading information, deviations from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices."

Predatory journals: no definition, no defence, Nature, December 11, 2019

These publications are driven exclusively by profit rather than by the dissemination and advancement of high-quality scientific knowledge.

They generate revenue by charging authors fees - commonly known as Article Processing Charges (APCs) - that far exceed the operational costs of their low-quality services.

However, the presence of publication fees alone is not a defining characteristic of a predatory publisher.

Many reputable open-access journals charge APCs to cover publishing costs, particularly in fields where research is often funded by grants. (Many subscription-based journals also charge authors, sometimes on a per-page or per-illustration basis.)

Predatory journals operate primarily as profit-driven enterprises and publish articles that lack of peer review or editing process.

Characteristics of Predatory Journals and Publishers

- They claim rapid publication and unusually fast peer review.
- They charge submission fees rather than publication fees and offer optional “fast-track” services, for an additional fee, for expedited peer review that appears to guarantee publication.
- Publication fees are not always clearly stated on the journal’s website.
- They attempt to retain copyright even when publishing articles as open access.
- Editors lack credibility or have published in predatory journals.
- Journals do not have a regular publication schedule.
- The journal title covers an excessively broad range of subjects in order to attract more submissions.
- Their websites are unclear and contain non-functioning links or phone numbers.
- Publishers use email addresses ending in gmail.com, yahoo.com, or other free email providers.
- They send spam emails to potential authors soliciting manuscript submissions.
- The publisher does not provide clear information on article licensing policies or demonstrate a lack of understanding of licensing standards (e.g. Creative Commons licences), and does not have an article retraction policy.

Characteristics of Predatory Journals and Publishers

- Authors are required to transfer copyright at the time of submission, making it impossible to submit the article to another publisher.
- Articles are accepted without proper review.
- Journals have titles that closely resemble those of well-known or established journals.
- The same editorial board is used for more than one journal.
- Editors and/or members of the editorial or peer review boards lack appropriate academic expertise, or insufficient academic information is provided about editors, reviewers, and board members.
- There are no policies or practices for digital preservation, meaning that if the journal ceases operations, all content may disappear from the internet.
- Articles are published before authors sign a publication agreement, and the publisher later refuses to withdraw the article if the author withdraws the submission.
- Articles or entire journals are removed from the internet without warning or notification to the authors.

The following elements can be used as indicators of the quality of a journal or publisher:

- The journal's scope is clearly defined and explicitly stated.
- The journal's target audience is academics/researchers.
- The publisher and editorial board consist of recognized experts in the field.
- The journal is affiliated with or funded by a reputable scientific organization, society, or academic institution.
- Articles fall within the journal's scope and meet the standards of the relevant scholarly discipline.
- Any publication fees or charges are clearly stated and easily accessible on the journal's website.
- The articles have DOIs.
- The journal clearly states the terms of use and reuse of content at the article level (e.g., Creative Commons CC BY licence).
- The journal has an ISSN (verify the ISSN through the [ISSN Portal](#)).
- The publisher is a member of the [Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association](#).
- The journal is listed in the [UlrichsWeb Global Serials Directory](#).
- The journal is included in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#).
- The journal is indexed in reputable databases (such as [MEDLINE](#), [Scopus](#), [Web of Science](#)).

Adapted from:

OA Journal Quality Indicators

www.gvsu.edu/library/open-access-journal-quality-indicators-144.htm

– ***Beall's List of Predatory Journals***

It is an archived list that contains a catalogue of publishers and journals, as well as advice on how to evaluate journals and publishers and what to consider before publishing your work.

– ***Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)***

DOAJ is a unique and comprehensive index of open-access journals, supported by a growing community committed to ensuring quality content that is freely accessible online.

DOAJ is committed to keeping its services free, including indexing, and making its data freely available.

– ***A-Z Database***

A list of the CUT'S Library databases containing scientific material.

– ***Alphabetical Database Directory***

A list of the Library of CUT's databases containing reputable scholarly material.

– ***Think. — Check. — Submit***

“Think. Check. Submit.” helps the research community identify reputable and trustworthy journals and publishers for publishing their scientific research. Through a series of tools and the application of good practices, this international, interdisciplinary initiative aims to educate researchers, promote integrity, and build trust in credible research and scholarly publishing.

thinkchecksubmit.org/





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