

# ‘Publish or Perish’ Trend: Fueling the Predatory Journals

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In the past, journals were published only in the print, and the only way to access them was through the library. However, today we can easily access journals and articles with a click. There are more online journals which have made it possible and feasible for authors to submit their work.

As an editor of a journal, I am often approached by younger aspiring authors for accelerated publication of their manuscripts. The journal is biannual and undergoes double-blind peer review process which in itself is time consuming. The authors also fear the reviewer’s comment about major corrections or even rejection of their article. The criteria of mandatory publication for academic promotion has compelled medical professionals to write and publish research articles. To get their articles published quick and easy, they sometimes fall prey to predatory journals. The ‘Publish or Perish’ trend should be discouraged and young researchers should be mentored and encouraged to publish in good impact journals.

Many predatory journals boast of being indexed in good databases and of high impact factor. They collect the email addresses of the corresponding authors who have already published in good journals and send them spam emails. The emails usually start with a praise of the recent publication. The emails are then continued to ask for a contribution where the journal state they are short of one article for the current issue and offer one of the following benefits in the form of fast track publication, discounted article processing and publication charges, free publication of book based upon the article published, inclusion in the editorial board, reviewer etc. to mention a

few. The only motive of predatory journals is to earn money. Sometimes authors receive invitation too as a guest speaker for upcoming conferences. The authors are lured of special discounts and made to deposit certain amount as nominal fees.

The words like ‘International’, ‘Global’, ‘Recent’, ‘Advanced’ etc. are used to make the journal good and authentic. Sometimes, similar names of the journal are used to confuse the authors. [1] The authors need to be cautious before submitting to such journals.

There are some simple ways of identifying if the journal is authentic and not predatory.

- a. Submission system: Most of the predatory journals ask to submit the manuscript as an email attachment. Majority of the good journals today have an online submission repository system rather than the traditional email or postal submission. If the authors are asked to submit the manuscript via email, the authors need to be cautious and check the journal home page.
- b. Contact address: The contact details of the editorial board members are usually not provided in the journal homepage. The journal or the editors do not have institutional email address.
- c. Archive: The authors can check the archive section of the journal and see how many issues have been previously published. They can choose any random article from the past issue and search the title to see if the search results match the journal and authors.
- d. Indexing: Many journals boast of being indexed into major databases like PubMed, Scopus, Copernicus, Google Scholar and so on. Authentic journals deposit their published articles into the database in which they are indexed. If the titles of previously published articles are searched in

Submitted: 10 November, 2020

Accepted: 9 December, 2020

Published: 16 December, 2020

a - Editor,

b - Journal of Lumbini Medical College, Nepal.

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## How to cite this article:

Atreya A. ‘Publish or Perish’ Trend: Fueling the Predatory Journals. *Journal of Lumbini Medical College*. 2020;8(2):183-184. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22502/jlmc.v8i2.409>. Epub: 2020 December 16.



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the database in which the journal is indexed, we can distinguish the predatory journal as their articles will not be shown in such databases. Journals claiming to be open access are indexed in Directory of Open Access Journal (DOAJ). Journals published from South East Asian Region (SEAR) countries are hosted on INSAP's online platform.

- e. Fee and charges: Authentic journals are transparent about their publication charges and fees. The article processing charge or publication charge is mentioned in the journal homepage. This might differ as per the article type, length of the article, publication of color images etc. Some journals operate in hybrid nature where there are no publication or submission charges, the author needs to pay if they wish their article to be open access. Many journals provide waiver to authors from low income countries, however predatory journals usually provide no waivers. Some predatory journals have a very low article processing charge (APC) or publication charges to lure the authors. These journals are not transparent on how the fees or charges would be used.
- f. Citation: Authors usually cite articles published in good journals. Articles published in good journals are cited by authors doing the study in the similar subject. Articles published in predatory journals are rarely cited.
- g. Peer review process: Authentic journals use peer review process to maintain the quality of the published work. The peer review process is either open or blinded. The authentic journals clearly mention the process of peer review in their webpage.
- h. Acceptance rate: Predatory journals usually have very high acceptance rate. They sometimes attract the authors stating they do not reject the manuscript instead get the manuscript instantly edited and ready to be published with or without extra charges.

Conducting a research is a tedious process which starts from submitting a proposal to the institutional review board (IRB). After the IRB approval the author is allowed to collect data. The data then need to be analyzed, manuscript drafted, edited and reviewed. A substantial amount of time and energy is already spent when the final manuscript is ready. Such hard word should not fall prey to the predatory journals.

## REFERENCES:

1. Kanchan T. Selecting a journal for one's scholarly work – What is in the name? *J Indian Acad Forensic Med.* 2019;41(2):85. DOI: 10.5958/0974-0848.2019.00023.X