

A brown and white cat is lying on a dark wooden table. The cat is looking directly at the camera with large, light-colored eyes. A laptop is partially visible in the foreground, slightly out of focus. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“Is This Journal Legitimate?”

Recently, there are an increasing number of open access journals that charge authors publishing fees. However, some of these journals are unscrupulous “predatory journals,” which should be avoided at all costs.

Please see the reverse of this leaflet for further details.

Q:What are “predatory journals?”

A:Although they claim to be peer-reviewed journals, predatory journals are low-quality open-access journals that do not conduct legitimate peer-reviews. Their real purpose is to profit from the paper submission fees collected from authors.

Q:What kinds of problems are caused by predatory journals?

A:Predatory journals are already becoming a serious issue for society as a whole. Publishing your work in such journals can contribute to the following problems: ● ● ●

Q:How can I identify predatory journals?

A: It can be difficult to identify predatory journals, and different people may judge the same journal differently. In general, however, the characteristics of predatory journals can be summarized as follows: ● ● ● ● ●

Q:How can I ensure that I don't publish my work in a predatory journal?

A:We recommended that you check the “whitelists” of legitimate journals provided below. Please note, however, that some whitelisted journals have been reported to be suspicious*. If you have any concerns, we recommend that you consult with other researchers in your field who are familiar with journal quality issues.

* Agnes Grudniewicz, et.al. Predatory journals: no definition, no defence. 2019, Nature 576, p. 210-212.

Whitelists
DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals)
<https://doaj.org>
Quality Open Access Market (QOAM)
<https://www.qoam.eu/journals>
Web of Science
<http://mjil.clarivate.com/>

A checklist
Think Check Submit
<https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>

- The author might be perceived as a “researcher with predatory publishing” and **lose academic credibility**.
- The lack of proper review process harms the quality of publications, and thus **the citation rate might be low**.
- **Problems related to publication fees** might occur.
- The author might not be able to withdraw the publication, and thus **cannot re-submit the work to other journals**.
- **The accessibility of the publication for a long term is not guaranteed**.
- **Public funding coming from tax incomes of the country** goes to the predatory publishers.
- The prevalence of predatory journals will **lower the credibility of all peer-reviewed publications in the community**.

Kearney M. H., et al. Predatory publishing: What authors need to know. Research in Nursing and Health. 2015, vol. 38, no. 1, p. 1-3.

- The journal is **suspicious in many perspectives**, such as including articles (very far) outside its stated scope.
- The publisher **released an overwhelmingly large suite of new journals during a very short period of time**.
- The journal website does **not reveal the journal's editorial office location**.
- The journal website posts **non-related or non-academic advertisements**.
- The journal website does **not present an editorial board**.
- The journal **mimics another journal title or the website of said journal**.
- The journal gives **unrealistic promises regarding the speed of the peer review process**.
- The journal does **not describe copyright agreements clearly** or demands the copyright of the paper.
- The **submission/publication fees are not clearly stated** on the journal's website.
- The journal displays **no strategies to handle misconduct or conflicts-of-interests**.
- The journal displays **no strategies to secure the archiving of articles when no longer in operation**.

Eriksson Stefan, Helgesson Gert. The false academy: predatory publishing in science and bioethics. Medicine Health Care and Philosophy. 2017, vol. 20, no. 2, p. 163-170.