



Unmasking Predatory Journals: Unfair Editorial Practices and Ethical Concerns in Academic Publishing - A summative review

Rujittika Mungmunpantip¹, Viroj Wiwanitkit²

¹Private Academic Consultant, Bangkok, Thailand.

²Adjunct professor, Joseph Ayobabalola University, Ikeji-Arakeji, Nigeria.

Abstract

This research investigates the ethical quandaries surrounding academic publishing, with a particular focus on predatory journals' unethical retraction and redecision techniques. It focuses on instances of questionable editorial decisions and probable conflicts of interest. The lack of transparency, poor management of conflicts of interest, and probable bias in retraction decisions all raise major questions about the journals' integrity and reliability. Maintaining fairness, responsibility, and ethical behavior is critical to establishing trust within the scientific community and upholding academic publishing standards.

Keywords: predatory, publishing, unethical, practice, editorial, decision

Introduction

Predatory journals use unethical and dishonest practices, usually masquerading as legitimate scholarly publications. They use the open access publishing model to charge large fees without providing adequate editing and peer review processes [1-3]. Because these periodicals do not have strong quality standards, they publish subpar or even fraudulent research. Spam emails, false impact factor claims, and deceptive metrics are used to lure authors, ultimately jeopardizing the reputation of academic papers. The unethical retraction and redecision processes used in predatory journals have recently been criticized, revealing new ethical difficulties in academia. This study aims to analyze these issues by using examples of questionable editorial decisions and potential conflicts of interests.

Emergence of Predatory Behavior Despite Publisher's Reputation

It is critical to note that predatory behavior can occur from any publisher, regardless of their well-established reputation, jeopardizing authors, readers, and the publishing sector as whole. We are currently concerned about some well-known publishers because to rising events [4-5].

Before dealing with a publication, authors should carefully analyze their reputations, practices, and any red flags, such as high costs or a lack of transparency. Authors can protect their rights and avoid becoming victims of unethical publishing practices by seeking representation from literary agency or legal counsel. Writers should advocate for themselves and ensure that they sign fair and moral publication agreements.

Predatory Focus on Profit

Predatory journals exploit academics by charging extravagant publication fees and providing poor editorial services, prioritizing profit over the dissemination of high-quality research. Authors, especially those in the early stages of their academic careers, should select reputable publications that adhere to ethical standards and exhibit caution when dealing with predatory activity. Fears of retraction or harm to unpublished work due to nonpayment emphasize predatory publishers' unethical behavior and their preference for financial gain over academic integrity.

If you do not pay, the journal will not process your submission. This is a frequent method of predatory journaling. Journals demand writers to pay a fee to have their articles published. This approach is unethical and may take advantage of researchers who lack the finances to cover these expenses. When submitting articles to journals, use caution and avoid predatory publishing techniques.

Concealed Editorial Teams

Predatory journals frequently advertise extensive editorial boards, which may or may not exist, with the publisher's people making editorial decisions. To ensure the integrity of their work, authors should avoid journals with questionable editorial boards and procedures. Exploitation due to unclear editorial processes may jeopardize the legitimacy of academic research. The editorial board and editor in chief may appear on occasion but have little effect, which could be damaging to their abilities. Incompetent editors rarely contribute, fail to communicate when anything goes wrong, and are slow to respond to unethical activity on the side of the publisher and the journal.

Disguised publisher

Hiding a publishing company's true ownership creates ethical concerns because it can lead to a lack of transparency and potentially mislead readers, writers, and the academic community as a whole. This lack of transparency may raise concerns about the reliability of both the publisher and the research it distributes. Establishing clarity about ownership and affiliations is critical for publishers to maintain credibility and trust in the academic community. By concealing the true ownership of “DP” as a “TF” subsidiary, for example, they may jeopardize their reputation and integrity. To honor moral standards and encourage openness, the publication should disclose ownership and any potential conflicts of interest. Writers and researchers must be aware of any associations or bonds that may influence the circulation and legitimacy of their writings.

Poor communication with author and poor response to any rebuttal

Predatory journals frequently fail to communicate openly and transparently with authors, particularly when concerns are expressed about the publication's quality or ethics. When an author attempts to defend an unfair judgment or retraction resulting from unethical tactics, predatory journals may simply reject additional correspondence or refuse to engage in further discussion. On the other side, a predatory journal may help to protect a pain open access that has been reported for unethical conflict of interest [6]. This unwillingness to address concerns or conflicts of interest indicates the journals' unprofessional and unethical conduct. Authors must exercise caution and be aware of the hazards associated with submitting their work to predatory publications.

Unfair Editorial Processes

Publishers' opaque publishing methods, such as unjust retractions or unreasonable publication delays, call into doubt their impartiality, conflicts of interest, and moral character. To ensure the integrity of scientific research, authors and readers should exercise caution when selecting journals with established norms and ethical guidelines. For example, in this case, some journals have lately classified the Integrity Assurance and Case Resolution (IACR) office and the Research Integrity Manager as unusual parties. While these groups are supposed to be active in upholding publishing standards and investigating integrity problems, their actions-retraction of articles without adequate reason or in compliance with conventional procedures-appear to support predatory behavior. This puts into doubt their credibility and ethics in processing scholarly papers.

Unfair Redecision

An unfair rededecision is one in which a journal rejects a submission without providing adequate justification or transparency. The appearance of a “Research Integrity Manager” who makes independent assessments calls the journal's integrity into question. The lack of accountability, transparency, and communication with writers suggests deceitful behavior, emphasizing the importance of moral norms in editing procedures.

Unfair Retraction

Ethical publishing standards are critical, as evidenced by a case study involving an unjust retraction of a commentary letter due to conflicts of interest and bias. If the letter is retracted without offering reasonable justifications or resolving ethical difficulties, it harms the journal's reputation as well as academic integrity [7]. If you want academic research to remain legitimate and respected, you must adhere to ethical standards and be transparent and honest when dealing with conflicts of interest.

Conclusion

Examining the moral quandaries involved with academic publishing-particularly in predatory journals-shows how important it is to uphold moral values, responsibility, and transparency.

Unfair editorial practices, conflicts of interest, and bias in retraction decisions all raise serious concerns about academic publishing's integrity. preserving impartiality and moral behavior is critical for preserving trust in the scientific community and bolstering the legitimacy of scholarly research.

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