



Sri Lanka Journal of Medicine

The Official Journal of the Kandy Society of Medicine

Volume. 28 No. 1 January - June 2019

Biannually E-ISSN 2579-1990

Bar Code: 9 772579 199003

Editors

Sulochana Wijetunga
MBBS, MD, D. Path

Veranja Liyanapathirana
MBBS, MPhil, Ph.D.

Assistant Editors

Heshan Jayaweera MBBS,
DCH, MD, MRCPCH

Shenal Thalagahagoda
MBBS, MD, MRCPCH

Editorial Board

Channa Ratnatunga FRCS

Neelakanthi Ratnatunga
MD, Ph.D. D.Path, FRCP

S.A.M. Kularatne MBBS,
MD, MRCP, FRCP, FCCP

Vajira Weerasinghe
BDS, MPhil, Ph.D.

W.M.Tilakaratne BDS,
MS, FDSRCS, Ph.D.,
FRCPATH

P.V.R. Kumarasiri MBBS,
MSc, MD

I.B. Gawarammana MBBS,
MD, MRCP, FRCPE,
Ph.D.

Thilini Rajapakse
MBBS, MD, PhD

Predatory journals and conferences – a brief overview

Anyone who has published at least one scientific article in a reputed journal would have experienced a surge in emails with flattering salutations. They range from “Dear esteemed scientist” to overly familiar greetings such as “Dear [First name]. A common “pick up” line is a flattering statement such as: “your great eminence in your chosen field of science is obvious by the work you have published”. These journals try to entice researchers with offers of relatively low publication fees and unbelievably short publication times. The said journals will have their own ‘false’ impact factor lists, where the predatory journal will be shown to score high; similarly, these journals will state that they are members of different indexing services, very similar to reputed indexing services.

Predatory journals maybe stand-alone or published by predatory publishers, who operate more than one journal. These journals charge a relatively low article processing fee, and publish anything and everything, without the rigorous peer review and evaluation that a piece of scientific writing submitted to a reputed journal would undergo.

What is the actual threat of these journals? Due to the lack of a stringent peer review process or an editorial policy, there is no guarantee that what is published is accurate, nor whether the methodology followed is correct; in fact, there is no certainty of the academic value of the published article. Other aspects, such as the copyright policies of these journals are also questionable, and there is usually no proper article retraction procedure or authorship guidelines.

How can one identify predatory journals or predatory publishers? We can start with the soliciting email itself. Standard journals rarely solicit individuals to submit articles, unless someone is a prominent researcher in a given field. Occasionally however, there may be emails requesting articles sent by legitimate journals. Then, look at the name of the journal. Predatory journals



Editorial Board (contd.)

A. Siribaddana MBBS, MD,
MRCP

Charles Anthonypillei
MBBS, MD

Eranga Siriweera MBBS,
MD, D. Path

Overseas members

Michael Sedgwick BSc,
MB ChB, MD, FRCP

Tissa Wijeratne MD,
FRACP, FRCP, FAHA,
FAAN

Published by

The Kandy Society of
Medicine,
General Hospital, Kandy

Tel: 081-2201702

Fax: 081- 2233336

Email: theksm66@gmail.com

Website: www.theksm.org

Typesetting:

Mr. Sampath Navaratne

generally have two types of names; names that mirror an established reputed journal of a given field, or very broad names, encompassing various fields into one journal.

Next, visit the website of the journal. A website of a reputed journal is normally well formatted and does not contain eye catching graphics in multiple colours or animations. Look for spelling mistakes. Check the editorial board of the journal, their credibility, the publisher and the address of the journal office. All these will offer certain clues. There are certain “white lists” of journals, maintained by different groups that list legitimate journals. For example, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), where we are also listed, and the Committee of Publishing Ethics (COPE). One can check to see if the relevant journal is listed there. Check the given indexing - are the indexing services mentioned established ones? Predatory publishers have become very clever in that they have devised indexing services and impact factors that are similar to the reputed existing ones. For young researchers, discussing with senior colleagues who are experienced in publishing will also help.

What about predatory conferences? Going in the line of predatory journals, these conferences with apparently legitimate names try to attract speakers with attractive registration fees, to exotic locations, for conferences. Again, their modus operandi is similar to those of predatory journals. Often, when delegates arrive at the given conference, they find that the quality leaves much to be desired.

In a period where publishing has become competitive and contributes to career progression in many ways, researchers may be tempted to take the easier route of predatory publications. However, to do that is to breach publication ethics, and carries penalties in some countries.

The Sri Lankan scientific community is still either naïve or are blissfully ignorant of this trap in academic publishing. However, there is no reason why we should remain ignorant, as information on this topic is now freely available. Further, it is our ethical responsibility to publish and present our research in authentic journals.

Veranja Liyanapathirana

Department of Microbiology,

Faculty of Medicine,

University of Peradeniya

Email: veranjacl@yahoo.com, veranjacl@pdn.ac.lk

ORCID iD:  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4356-2172>

<https://doi.org/10.4038/sljm.v28i1.118>