

Predatory Publishing: how to spot and avoid

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Library @ IIT Gandhinagar

13th April 2023

What will be covered in this session

- Introduction
- Scholarly publishing models
- What lead to Predatory publishing?
- What is predatory publishing?
- Predatory publishers - common characteristics
- Growth of predatory journals
- How to spot Predatory Journals?
- Predatory Conference- how to spot it?
- What did the publishing Industry do?
- Why Predatory Publishing is harmful
- Sources to consult often...

Introduction

- Dissemination of research results - a core of scholarly work for any researcher
- Publishing in a high-quality peer reviewed journals - a prime goal
- Selecting right journal - an important step when submitting a manuscript
- With explosion of newly formed scholarly journals - task is daunting
- While many journals & their publishers are respectable, others are not
- Greatest concern are those engage in predatory practices (unethical)

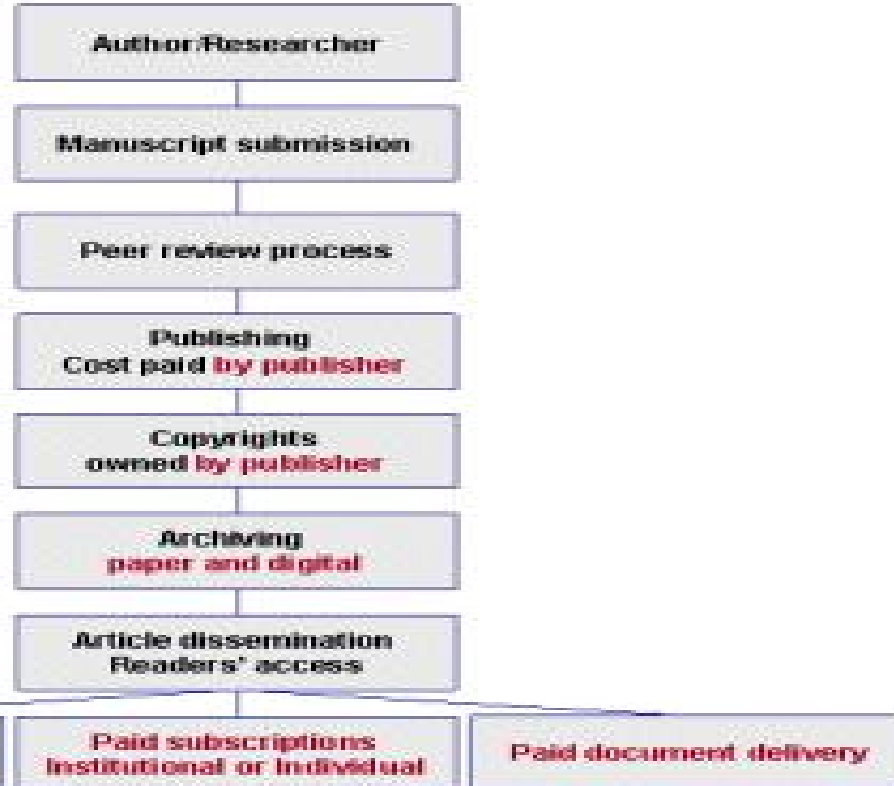
Scholarly Publishing Models

- Web has revolutionized the way how scholarly work is disseminated
 - Platform for publishing, distributing & accessing scholarly content
- Scholarly publishing models have/still are undergoing a major change
 - **Traditional model**
 - **Open Access (2002) OA model:** Literature in digital, online, free of charge and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions
 - **Gold** – Journals- depend on revenue through Article Processing Charge
 - **Hybrid**- Subscription based journal where selected articles published on paying APC
 - **Green** – E-Print/Preprint Archives, Institutional Repositories
 - **Diamond/Platinum**- Third party funded (organization, nationally, community driven)
 - **Bronze**- Institutions, Associations, non-profit making- no right re-use (no open license)

Scholarly Publishing Models

Publishing Models

Traditional



Open Access



What lead to Predatory Publishing?

- Emergence of predatory publishing
- Major Factors
 - Over emphasis on publishing – quantity over quality
 - Research evaluation criteria
 - Online platforms for publishing
 - OA publishing – Gold OA- based on APC
 - Commercialization of publishing
 - Shortcoming in peer review system
 - Resources disparities- global south
- Predatory publishing model primarily built on APC- article processing charge

What is predatory publishing?...

Word 'Predatory' was coined by Jeffrey Beall in 2010

Means preying naturally on others, seeking to exploit others

“...predatory publishers...publish counterfeit journals to exploit the open-access model in which the author pays. These predatory publishers are dishonest and lack transparency. They aim to dupe researchers, especially those inexperienced in scholarly communication.”

Beall, J. (2012) “Predatory publishers are corrupting open access”, *Nature*, vol. 489 iss. 7415.

What is predatory publishing?...

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

◦ Grudniewicz, A. *Science* (576)7786. 2019 210-212.

In nutshell, "Predatory journals are deceptive and often fake, giving appearance of legitimate peer-reviewed journals and impact academic stake holders by exploiting the OA model while using misleading tactics to solicit article submissions" Simon Linacre *The Predator Effect*, 2022

What is predatory publishing?

Also described as

- Fake publishing
- Dark side of publishing
- Dubious
- Low credibility
- Deceptive
- Scholarly bad faith
- Sham journals
- Pseudo journals &
- Described in many other bad words

Predatory publishers - common characteristics

- Ultimate goal is to make money - not to publish scholarly research
- Use deception to appear legitimate
- Make false claims about services offered (peer review)
- Unethical business practices
- Exploit the need for academics to publish
- No concern for quality of work published
- Do not follow accepted scholarly publishing best practices

(Source: <https://libguides.gwumc.edu/PredatoryPublishing>)

Predatory publishing

- Journals
- Conferences
- Books publishing

Growth of predatory journals

- Rapidly increasing & is now a big industry
 - 2010: 53,000 articles
 - 2014: 4,20,000 articles
 - 2021: 7,87,000 articles
 - 16000 active predatory journals & 1800 added every year (*Cabells' Predatory Reports, May 2022*)
 - Publishers- largely from Asia & Africa, now spread across globe
 - New Study published by Demir (2018)
 - 24860 articles published in predatory journals
 - 2592 articles were contributed by Indians (10%4)
- Average APC : \$ 178 (Shen C & Bjork B C *BMC Med* 2015, vol 13 1-15)

How to spot Predatory Journals?



Received Tuesday 01:30

Subject: *Accepting articles for a special issue on [topic]*

**Journal of [XXX]
IF: 2.4* I (ISSN number) I (DOI number) I Google Scholar**

Respected Cook F,

Greetings of the day!

[Journal of \[XXX\]](#) is an international, open access, peer-reviewed online journal publishing across XXX fields committed to publishing the highest quality articles. [Journal of \[XXX\]](#) is inviting articles for a special issue on [topic].

I was impressed by your eminent paper [INSERT RECENT PUBLICATION] and welcome you to submit your prestigious unpublished article of any type (research, review, case report, short communication, intellectual articles, image articles and conceptual papers).

Kind note:

Kindly submit by **[DATE]**. We can extend the deadline as per your convenience

Article acceptance notification: within 24hours

APC: We are publishing for the next issue for a reduce fee of [cost]

Note: Submit your upcoming manuscript as an attachment to [\[email address\]](#) or our [online submission \[hyperlink\]](#).

It would be an honour to have you on our editorial board. Please send your CV and Digital Photo if you are willing to take part.

Feel free to contact if any further queries. I excited to work with you at the earliest possible. We greatly appreciate you help with diffusing this information with your colleagues.

Wishing you Good Health and Happiness!

Cordially,

[Name]

Editorial Coordinator

Journal of [XXX]

[Publisher name]



From: biomed <biomed@fortuneoaj.com>
Date: Fri, Aug 26, 2022 at 10:26 AM
Subject: Synapomorphic variations in the THAP domains of th
To:

Archives of Clinical and Biomedical Research {ISSN: 2572-5017}

IF: 3.1
PubMed ID: 101768967

The article entitled “Synapomorphic variations in the THAP domains of the human THAP protein family and its homologs bio.....”, was impressed by our journal Editorial board members.

Hence we are enquiring you to check the possibility of publishing the same article in our journal.

You can submit your article as an E-mail attachment and if need additional time reply to us.

Regards
Sophia Bennet

From: **Elena Vracaric** <elena@oa.intechopen.com>

Date: Fri, Nov 18, 2022 at 10:33 AM

Subject: Dr. ... - Contribute to - Computer Memory and Data Storage

To:

Dear Dr.

Due to your involvement in the field and the research you published in your paper, "A 10T, 0.22fJ/Bit/Search Mixed-VTPseudo Precharge-Free Content Addressable Memory," IntechOpen invites you to contribute a chapter to "Computer Memory and Data Storage," an Open Access book edited by Dr. Azam Seyedi.

Work with an internationally recognized peer group and gain increased visibility for your published work.

Please visit the book project page to start the submission process at:

https://mts.intechopen.com/welcome?books_hash=37c6580a3ad116eb905687f93a6527e6&call_email=joycee@iitgn.ac.in&books_id=12065&src=S-F-1&r=

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Elena Vracaric

Author Service Manager

IntechOpen

Rijeka: Janeza Trdine 9, 51000 Rijeka, Croatia

London: 5 Princes Gate Court, London, SW7 2QJ, UK

+44 20 8089 5702

Need Only 2 Articles!

Dear Dr. ,

I will be thankful if you could concern on my request.

I am pleased to inform you that Journal Y is planning to release Volume 5 Issue 1 by 3rd week of January and **we need only two articles to accomplish this issue.** In fact **I am afraid as I am having hardly few days in hand to release the issue.** Hence **I have chosen some illustrious people like you** to support us for release the upcoming issue. So please support us with your contribution of 2 Page Mini-Review towards publication in Journal Y.

Your **prompt submission sustains us a lot** and **impacts my ranking** in end of this month.

Hope you understand my concern and your **kind attention in this regard highly esteemed.**

Await your hopeful submission.

Best Regards,

Seeking Editorial Board Member

Dear Dr. ,

It is **our immense pleasure** to **invite you as an Editorial Board member** for Journal Y.

Publisher Y **in its bag having 3500+ Open Access quality articles** and **more than 5000 EB has come about in the short period** and we have **indexed in repositories like ICMJE & Pubs Hub**, that **adds value to the quality work published** and helps in easy access throughout the globe.

Being aware of your proficiency and expertise in various fields we invite you to be **honorable editor** for Journal Y. In fact **having your profile in our Journal adds visibility to us** as well as **many viewers will cite your profile**.

If you are willing to accept our invitation to serve as an editor to the mentioned journal, **kindly send us your CV, Biography, Research Interest & Recent portrait photograph**.

Do not hesitate to contact us for any queries. We await your positive response.

Typically, a solicitation email in spam/junk box and subject refers to submitting or accepting or manuscripts. Date/time stamp may not be in keeping with working hours of country of origin

Received Tuesday 01:30
Subject: *Accepting articles for a special issue on [topic]*

Journal name mimics well-known legitimate journals

Journal of [XXX]
IF: 2.4* I (ISSN number) I (DOI number) I Google Scholar

Advertises citation metrics which cannot be verified and indexed in databases

Addressed inappropriately in terms of title, first, surname

Respected Cook F,

Greetings of the day!

Inappropriate language

Falsely claims to be peer-reviewed

Journal of [XXX] is an international, open access, peer-reviewed online journal publishing across XXX fields committed to publishing the highest quality articles. Journal of [XXX] is inviting articles for a special issue on [topic].

Targets authors with flattery

I was impressed by your eminent paper [INSERT RECENT PUBLICATION] and welcome you to submit your prestigious unpublished article of any type (research, review, case report, short communication, intellectual articles, image articles and conceptual papers).

No author guidelines for article types, conflict of interest, funding statement requirements
No cover letter

Fast unrealistic timeline which would not support a robust peer review process

Kind note:

Kindly submit by [DATE]. We can extend the deadline as per your convenience
Article acceptance notification: within 24hours

APC sometimes stated upfront, sometimes not. No information about transformation agreements with universities for the open access fee

APC: We are publishing for the next issue for a reduce fee of [cost]

Note: Submit your upcoming manuscript as an attachment to [\[email address\]](#) or our [online submission \[hyperlink\]](#).

Direct email submission. Online submission often directs to the publisher website where submission process remains an e-mail with manuscript attached

It would be an honour to have you on our editorial board. Please send your CV and Digital Photo if you are willing to take part.

Inappropriate selection process for an editorial board no conflict-of-interest consideration.

Feel free to contact if any further queries. I excited to work with you at the earliest possible. We greatly appreciate you help with diffusing this information with your colleagues.

Grammatical errors

Wishing you Good Health and Happiness!

Inappropriate language

Inappropriate language

Cordially,
[Name]
Editorial Coordinator
Journal of [XXX]
[Publisher name]

How does one identify predatory journals?

- Monice Berger, 2017: identified 15 characteristics
- Jeffrey Beall, 2013: identified 7 major characteristics
- Erfanmanesh & Pourhossein, 2017: listed 17 common characteristics
- Shamseer & Moher 2017: Thirteen ways to spot predatory journals
- Many other sources...

Sl. No.	Common Features	Predatory Journal
1	Peer-review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claims to have a peer-review process but does not provide this or uses duplicated templated reports
2	Editorial service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers a timeline that would be unrealistic for publication with a robust peer-review process eg <24 hours • Publishes articles with spelling/grammar mistakes • No plagiarism screening or copyediting
3	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishes articles with an APC even if low quality or not within the scope of the journal. • Lacks transparency about the APC, with some not advertising this upfront, only stating it after the article is accepted
4	Business practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressively targets authors via solicitation emails that are persuasive in language style and may contain grammar/spelling mistakes
5	Publishing practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires authors to sign away copyright at the submission stage, preventing them from withdrawing and preventing publishing elsewhere • Publishes articles before authors have signed publishing agreements • Publishes articles on temporary websites which may be removed and do not inform the authors
6	Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States offices in a country which does not align with time stamps of solicitation emails or phone number country codes
7	Indexing and metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claims to have an impact factor or citation metrics that cannot be verified • Mimics names of well-known, legitimate journals

Spotting Predatory Journals...

- Journal website-web pages filled with bogus journals
- Published articles- content, quality, details, format, references etc
- Editorial Board & affiliation with inaccurate information
- Unsolicited email invitations
- Soliciting authors to be editors, reviewers, special issue editors
- Rapid publication with peer review done
- Unclear fees- too much variation

Spotting Predatory Journals...

- Broad journal scope, misleading, mimicking existing established titles
- Spelling & grammatical errors
- Distorted or unauthorized images
- Homepage targets authors
- Fake metrics- impact factor, h-index...
- Promotes questionable index sources –whether indexed WoS, Scopus...
- Poor description of manuscript handling process

Spotting Predatory Journals...

- Email manuscript submission
- No retraction policy
- Digital preservation information lacking
- Low article processing charges
- Generic contact email address (Gmail, Yahoo, etc.)
- Copyright information lacking
- Engaging in questionable business practices
- Many other misleading activities

Simple rules for avoiding predatory publishing scams

- Be suspicious
- Assess the journal content
- Check publication fees
- Examine journals peer review standards
- Recognise the gatekeepers (editorial board/committee)
- Discover where the journal is indexed
- Verify claims to metrics
- Identify the publisher
- Go beyond lists
- Do not over react
- Finally, Ask a Librarian

(<https://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1009377>)

Think. Check. Submit.

<https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>



Predatory Conference

- Many predatory publishers are organizing fake conferences
- At glance, these conferences can seem to be legitimate and scientific based events
- These conferences are organized by revenue generating companies who not only exploit presenters & attendees, but also increase profits by collecting registration fees
- These fake conferences do not provide adequate scholarly presentation sessions
- Many academics arrive at these conferences only to discover that there are very few attendees, a limited number of actual presentations, or that multiple conferences covering a wide range of topics are combined into a single conference

How to spot predatory conferences

- Conference Organizers and Sponsorship
- Aim & Scope
- Agenda & Editorial Committee
- Conference Location
- Poorly Organized
- Website
- Invitation
- Reputation
- Peer Review Process
- Conference Fees

Sl. No.	Common Features	Predatory Conferences
1	Peer-review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack peer-review processes
2	Editorial service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a hassle-free submission process Fast-track acceptance guarantees are common
3	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mislead authors with false information about the conference Deceive attendees into paying hefty fees for conference registration, accommodation, and travel. Force attendees to book accommodation through organisers <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite speakers and chairs based on those who pay Do not offer refunds for cancelled conferences Wide academic subject matter and multidisciplinary scope Keynote speakers not in attendance Conference programme reduced from three to two days Overcrowded small rooms with no workshops as advertised
4	Business practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicitation emails with flattering language, grammatical errors, nonscientific language, targeting junior or novice researchers Conferences held by unknown organisations Organisers often not well-known with pictures copied without permission that do not reveal their identity Choose attractive, exotic locations to host conferences Conferences often situated in small hotels, never in universities or conference centres
5	Publishing practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisers steal identities of attendees without consent and use personal information and pictures to portray them as part of the conference team Publish abstracts on websites without permission
6	Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No physical address provided, only email Lack of details regarding the meeting
7	Indexing and metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conferences organised for profit, foregoing scientific value

Think. Check. Attend.

<https://thinkcheckattend.org/>



What did the publishing industry do?

- OASPA in association with DOAJ , COPE, SPARC, WAME & others
 - **Principles of transparency & best practices in scholarly publishing**
 - OASPA : Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association membership
 - COPE: Committee on Publication Ethics
 - World Association of Medical Editors (WAME)
- ISSN National & International Centre
- ISSN & DOAJ: Exchange of journal metadata (quality check)
- DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals
- Ulrichsweb Periodical directory
- Cabell's Scholarly Analytics (Predatory Reports & Journalytics)
- Jeffrey Beall's "potential, possible, or probable predatory" journals & publishers (disappeared since Jan 2017)

Why Predatory Publishing is Harmful

- Lack of peer-review
- Work could disappear
- Work will be difficult to find- not indexed
- Harmful to reputation
- Peer group will not recognise

How is the situation being handled?

- Explicit warning from publishers, institutions, and funders
- Increase funding support for OA publishing
- Prohibit use of funds to support publishing in Predatory journals
- Audit where grantee publish their research
- No promotions, further funding for research
- Declaration to ethics committee
- Condition to work with institute library
- Must check against authentic sources

How the libraries playing their role?

- Start conversation about scholarly publishing process or entire echo system
- Educate researchers- how to select journals for publishing their research
- Create sufficient awareness
- Create resources, tools , support systems, consultations
- Help create policy guidelines
- Be part of the team which assists researchers
- Share information about predatory publishing
- Monitor Institution's publications

Sources to consult often

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Think. Check. Attend <https://thinkcheckattend.org/>

Sherpa Romeo: <https://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/about.html>

DOAJ: <https://doaj.org/>

Master Journals List (WoS): <https://mjl.clarivate.com/home>

Scopus (Sources Indexed) : <https://www.scopus.com>

SJR Scimago Journal & Country Rank: <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php>

UGC CARE List of Journals: <https://ugccare.unipune.ac.in/apps1/home/index>

ISSN National & International Centre : <https://www.issn.org/>

Cabells' Scholarly Analytics: <https://www2.cabells.com/>

UlrichsWeb Global Serial Directory: <http://ulrichsweb.serialssolutions.com/login>

! THINK **✓** CHECK **>** SUBMIT

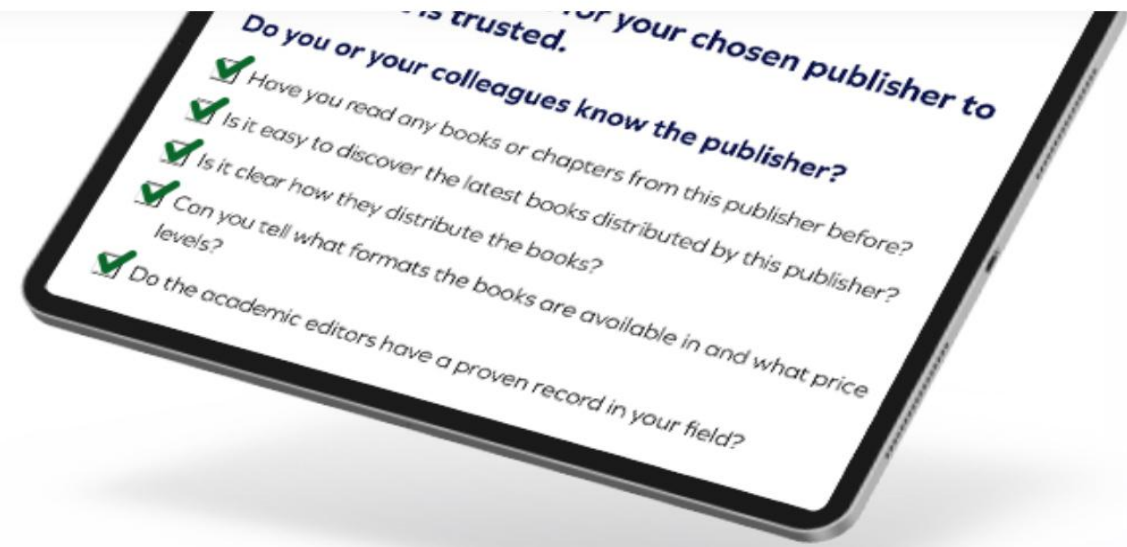
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✓ **Check**

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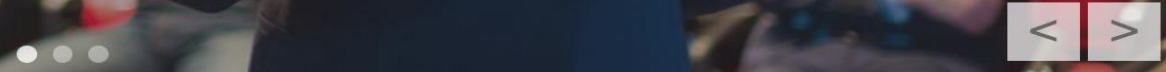
> **Submit**

Only if you can answer 'yes' to the questions on our check list.



Hello world!

Choosing the right conference to attend and present your research



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No journals were included in the UGC-CARE list in its 16th Quarter update (January 2023 to March 2023).

Deadline for the submission of new journals will be 10th June 2023. Journals submitted after that would be considered only for the July 2023 update.

If any misleading and/or false metrics are displayed anywhere on the journal's website or its pages the journal will not be eligible for inclusion in the UGC-CARE List.

Message from
Prof. M.Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman, UGC.

Message from
Prof. D.P. Singh, Former Chairman, UGC

Foreword by
Prof. Bhushan Patwardhan, former Vice
Chairman, UGC
& Chairman, UGC-CARE Empowered
Committee

Notifications

- UGC-CARE Public notice : 20th April 2020
- UGC-CARE Public notice : December 2019
- UGC-CARE Public notice : 16th September 2019
- UGC-CARE Public notice : 14th June 2019
- UGC-CARE Public notice : 14th January 2019

Alert

[List of Cloned Journals UGC-CARE Group I](#)

Alert

[List of Cloned Journals UGC-CARE Group II](#)

UGC-CARE List Group I Search

NEW Quick Search (UGC-CARE Group I)

UGC-CARE List Group II Journals indexed in globally recognised databases.

These journals are part of UGC-CARE List as Group II and searchable through following links.

Web of Science

1. Arts & Humanities Citation Index.

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The ISSN uses URN as a persistent identifier specifically designed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).
<http://urn.issn.org/>

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Australia Hybrid access Aug 17

CCI Snapshot **42**
Altmetric Report
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Audience

International Society for Behavioral Ecology
Sponsor

1045-2249
ISSN

1465-7279
e-ISSN

1990
Launch date

Unknown
Launch date

Bringing together significant work on all aspects of the subject, Behavioral Ecology is broad-based and covers both empirical and theoretical approaches.

Oxford University Press
Behavioral Ecology

Australia Hybrid access Aug 17

CCI Snapshot **42**
Altmetric Report
Median Mentions/Article

2016

Web Method **0-5%**
Invited articles

26-30 pp Length **See Manuscript Guidelines**
Style

Need help preparing your manuscript?

88% 66%
Cabell's Classification Index

85% 48%
Difficulty of Acceptance

42
Altmetric Report
Median Mentions/Article

What is the CCI?

Discipline

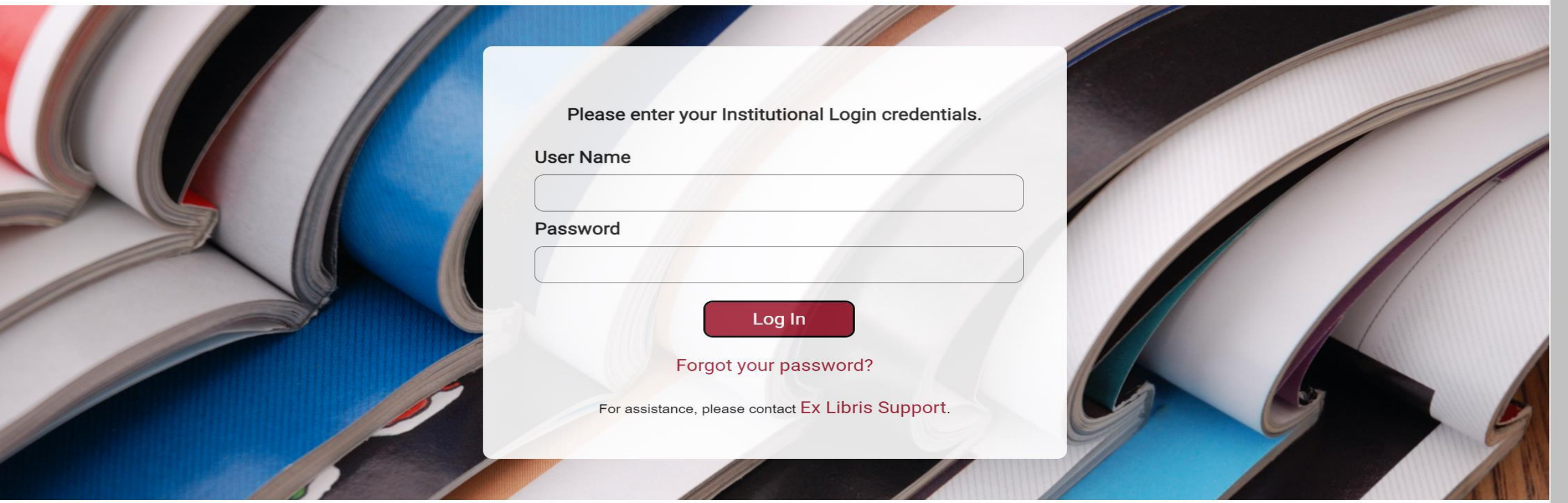
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ARCHIVES

Select Month

A high-quality cloned journal has duped hundreds of scholars, and has no reason to stop

Have you heard about hijacked journals, which take over legitimate publications' titles, ISSNs, and other metadata without their permission? We recently launched the Retraction Watch Hijacked Journal Checker, and will be publishing regular posts like this one to tell the stories of some of those cases.



Anna Abalkina

In 2021, I created an alert on Scopus to keep me updated about new publications in the *Hong Kong Journal of Social Sciences*, which had been hijacked by fraudulent publishers.

BLOG | ACADEMIA AND GOVERNMENT

MARCH 20, 2023

3 MINUTE READ

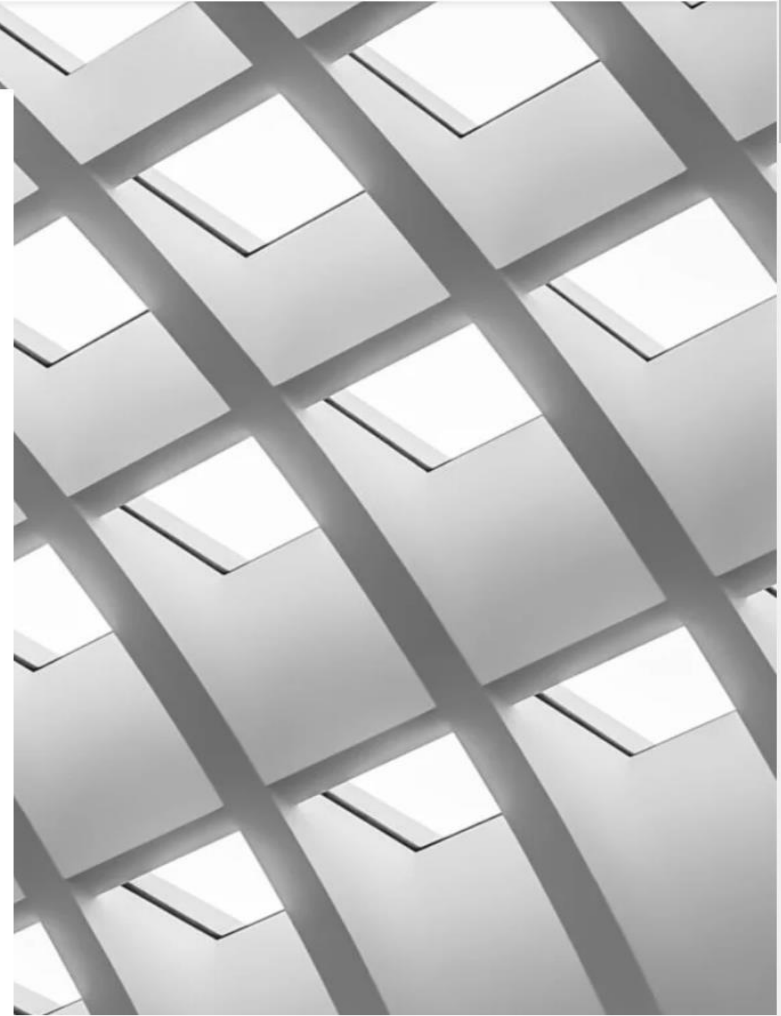
Supporting integrity of the scholarly record: Our commitment to curation and selectivity in the Web of Science

More than 50 journals already de-listed this year for failing to meet our quality selection criteria



DR NANDITA QUADERI
Editor-in-Chief & Vice President, Web of Science
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To sum up...

- If not controlled, will erode integrity of scholarship
- Slowly get indexed in to major e-databases
- Ensure to cut off the supply of manuscripts
- An opportunity for libraries to contribute meaningfully
- Libraries need to start educating, guiding and supporting researchers
- Create tools, resources, support systems in libraries
- Take proactive role - yet another important opportunity

Reference

Cook, F., Govender, R., & Brennan, P. A. (2023). Greetings from your predatory journal! What they are, why they are a problem, how to spot and avoid them. *British Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, 10–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bjoms.2023.02.005>