Identifying Predatory Journals: The Future of Reference Processing

Simon Linacre
Marketing Director
simon.linacre@cabells.com
Bio: Simon Linacre

- Marketing Director at Cabells having spent 15 years in publishing at Emerald, where he had direct experience in journal acquisitions, open access and business development

- Background is in journalism and he has been published in academic journals on the topics of bibliometrics, publication ethics and knowledge transfer.

- Holds Masters degrees in Philosophy and International Business and has global experience lecturing to researchers on publishing strategies. Currently writing a short book on predatory publishing and related behaviours.
Forty years of experience

• **Cabells began life in the late 1970s** as a directory of recommended business and management journals based in Texas, USA

• Started by management professor Dr Dave Cabell, the company has assessed journal quality for **over 40 years**

• **Journalytics** indexes over 11,000 good quality journals across most disciplines, and will add over 6,000 Medical journals in 2022

• **Predatory Reports** launched in and now includes over 15,000 predatory journals
Predatory Reports: Definition

A predatory journal is an opportunistic publishing venue that exploits the academic need to publish but offers little reward for those using their services.

The "publish or perish" scenario combined with the relative ease of launching online journals has inadvertently created a market ripe for the exploitation of researchers.

Some journals are predatory on purpose, while others may make mistakes due to neglect, mismanagement, or inexperience.

While the motivations and methods vary, predatory journals have a number of common characteristics:

- Their primary goal is to make money (i.e. there will be APC fees).
- They do not care about the quality of the work published (i.e. no or little editing or peer-review).
- They make false claims or promises (i.e. claims of impact factors and indexing).
- They engage in unethical business practices
- They fail to follow accepted standards or best practices of scholarly publishing
In working with researchers, one of the key issues they’re struggling with today is the rise of predatory journals — and how they impact on their need to have access to, and to publish within, quality scholarly journals.

The end of Beall’s list of predatory publishers made it clear just how important a role it had played in the academic universe. In 2017, Cabells launched the **Predatory Reports** — a subscription-based searchable database of predatory journals, with reports listing specific violations for each journal.

Since its launch in 2017 the **database** has grown to cover more than 15,000 predatory journals.
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Some journals are predatory on purpose, while others may make mistakes due to neglect, mismanagement, or inexperience.

Predatory journals make false claims (such as quick peer-review) to lure unwary authors into submitting papers.

While sending a predatory journal a manuscript may see it "published" there is no guarantee that it underwent peer review, is included in indexes like Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus, or that it will be available in a month much less in five years.
Predatory journals do researchers a disservice by claiming to be a reputable outlet for publication. Authors are providing a valuable product and legitimate journals provide valuable services to protect their work. Some of the dangers of publishing within a predatory journal include:

**Work subject to sub-par/no peer-review**

The peer-review system isn't perfect but papers that undergo peer-review are better for it. Researchers planning to seek promotion want to make sure they are publishing in a place that values their work and is willing to devote time and resources to improving it.

**Work unavailable from legitimate sources**

One of the advantages of publishing with a reputable journal is that they ensure legitimacy. Once research is published in a predatory journal – no matter how good – it is lost from legitimate journals.

**Work contaminates published research**

While many authors avoid publishing in predatory journals, some cite research without realising it was from a predatory journal, or the research itself used non-peer reviewed publications.
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New Innovation

Since early 2021, Cabells has been working with Inera and its Edifix platform to develop a new service that has never been offered before to researchers.

By combining their expertise, Inera and Cabells have been able to offer users enhanced functionality, where references are matched against Cabells’ Predatory Reports’ database. Subscribers to Edifix have been able to check their article’s references against Cabells’ Predatory Reports database for free during an open beta phase.
Predatory Publishing: Benefits of Edifix

Early Data
As will be seen shortly, early data shows that there appears to be a small but significant contamination of users’ research articles from predatory journals, which could have serious implications for those articles basing their research on potentially flawed or unchecked sources.

Benefits
Users get the following benefits from integration between Cabells and Edifix:
- Ensure primary and secondary sources are checked for predatory journals and potential contamination
- Peace of mind over future concerns over research
- Improving overall quality of scholarly record
THANK YOU