
Impact of Predatory Journals on Sustaining of Publishing Quality: A Literature Review

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Predatory/deceptive journals are exploiting the scholarly publication models and indexing systems, and have been reported to be affecting the publication quality in scholarly information dissemination. Hence, the importance of being alert about the existence of deceptive literature/predatory journals, and the approaches to avoiding them is widely discussed in the recent literature. The objective of this article is to review the recent scholarly literature on sustaining the publication quality in the context of academic information dissemination. Literature over the last five years (January 2016- November 2020) were searched through seven databases to locate research on quality issues due to predatory journals. They were individually assessed for relevance and quality; 15 most relevant papers were selected for this review. This review identified the issues linked with the creation of blacklists/whitelists, the peer review process, citation patterns, indexing them in citation databases, and related experience of authors as well as of authorities, that provide fundamental approaches for avoiding questionable/predatory journals. Discussions on blacklists/whitelists concern about their binary classification and highlight the need for unbiased quality criteria for inclusion. The importance of transparency in the peer-review process has been highlighted as an approach to sustain true quality. Concerns on citation patterns have brought out the evaluation criterion denoting the unethical publishing practices, in selecting quality sources to be referenced in ongoing research. The Predatory publications are inadvertently indexed in well-known and high-quality databases posing further weight on the “Think. Check. Submit” strategy. Furthermore, the review revealed that the problem of fake/predatory publishing is not limited to vulnerable researchers. Hence, these insights into quality publishing will contribute to the authors’ decision making, as well as authorities’ concerns in promoting ethical scholarly publishing practices.

Keywords: Predatory publishing, Publication-quality, Scholarly communication