



ELSEVIER



JOURNAL of PEDIATRIC NURSING

Official Journal of the
Society of Pediatric Nurses and the
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society

EDITORIAL

Authors Beware: Open Access Predatory Journals



Email notices of spurious offers of newly discovered inheritances, false reporting describing security breaches of financial accounts, and other deceptive ploys are received on a continuous basis by email users. These emails have only one purpose—to illegally capture the recipients' confidential account information for fraudulent purposes. Hopefully, these intentionally deceptive notices are recognized as counterfeit by most recipients. Unfortunately, this deceptive practice for unscrupulous financial gain is now targeting open access publishing. Dr. Jeffrey Beall, a recognized expert in exposing fraudulent open access publishing, has coined the term “predatory publishers,” an appropriate description of the interlopers who have entered into the publishing realm of science, clinical practice, and scholarship. Predatory is an apt term to describe these so-called publishers as it refers to those who are “inclined or intended to injure or exploit others for personal gain or profit” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2015).

Unfortunately, the damaging consequences of predatory publishers are many, pervasive and long-lasting. Authors are harmed both personally and professionally. Unknowingly authors pay the “publication costs” to have their articles published and freely accessible to readers. The costs incurred by submitting authors range from several hundreds to thousands of dollars. Professionally, articles published in predatory journals are not indexed in any reputable bibliographic database such as CINAHL and PubMed. The articles published in predatory journals are destined as tainted as having not been legitimately peer-reviewed and therefore not acceptable for scientific and professional

purposes. Sooner than later the articles disappear into the ether space created by fraudulent publishers.

Regrettably, on several occasions we have been contacted by authors who have published their work unknowingly in predatory journals. Unfortunately the authors learn about the adverse consequences after their articles have been “published.” The means to remedy these situations are difficult if not nearly impossible to rectify as these publications are assigned a doi number. Fortunately, prospective authors are learning about the very damaging consequences of publishing articles with predatory publishers. One such effort, under the leadership of the INANE (2014a) was begun recently. As part of this effort, a position statement, entitled *INANE Predatory Publishing Practices Collaborative* (2014b) was published. This position paper, authored by the INANE “Predatory Publishing Practices” Collaborative, provides the reader with instructive background information about the seminal goals of open access publishing, description of predatory practices and incentives, and INANE's Call to Action. Readers are encouraged to access this document to be apprised of the widespread efforts now under way by nursing journal editors worldwide.

There are a number of websites that are excellent resources for acquiring additional information about predatory journals and reputable peer-reviewed journals. *Scholarly Open Access: Critical analysis of scholarly open access journals* (2016), (website link: <https://scholarlyoa.com/>) developed by Dr. Jeffrey Beall, contains a comprehensive listing of predatory journals. In addition, commentaries about the fraudulent publishers are available as well. The *Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)* (2016) contains a listing of reputable open access journals (Website link: <https://doaj.org/>). Nursing authors can access the *Directory of Nursing Journals* (n.d.), a collaboration between INANE and *Nurse Author & Editor* for a

comprehensive international listing of reputable nursing journals (Website link: <http://nursingeditors.com/journals-directory/>).

Although international efforts are under way by the nursing editors to inform our community of nursing and interdisciplinary authors and colleagues of these unethical and fraudulent practices, certainly more needs to be done. In order to protect colleagues and the public, widespread outreach and dissemination of information pertaining to predatory journals are needed. Our colleagues in nursing and interdisciplinary academic and practice settings need to be informed about these unethical publishing practices in numerous venues wherein publishing efforts are supported and expected. Specific guidance needs to be provided to aspiring writers whether in academic, clinical or community based settings about submission of papers to nursing journals that abide by publication ethics and those that do not. Aspiring and novice authors are at particular disadvantage for fully understanding what is appropriate and not appropriate publishing practices.

Efforts are needed within academic institutions to fully inform faculty about this publishing development and to provide resource materials and websites links previously described. Collective institutional efforts can be undertaken to ensure that colleagues and students acquire the information needed to avoid publishing in predatory journals. Review committees for faculty appointments and promotion will need to be informed about predatory journals when reviewing faculty dossiers. It behooves faculty members not only to include content about predatory publishers in coursework but to provide ongoing mentoring of students especially in courses wherein assignments include the requirements to write publishable papers. Committee members of theses, dissertations, and Capstone projects need to incorporate into their advisement and mentoring activities of students the warnings about

predatory journals. Outreach to colleagues in clinical settings can be undertaken by nurse scientists and/or nursing administrators. Annual conferences of specialty nursing organizations and regional research meetings are excellent venues for spreading the word about predatory journals.

Additionally, it is incumbent upon journal editors and reviewers to be on the alert for reference citations that originate in predatory journals. The JPN editorial team is committed to contributing high quality publications to the science and practice of pediatric and child health nursing and to join the international effort of INANE to inform our nursing and interdisciplinary colleagues, our readership, and the public of this widespread publishing epidemic.

Cecily L. Betz, PhD, RN, FAAN

Editor-in-Chief

E-mail address: cbetz@chla.usc.edu

References

- Directory of Nursing Journals. Retrieved on February 12, 2016 from <http://nursingeditors.com/journals-directory/>.
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) (2016). Retrieved on February 12, 2016 from <https://doaj.org/>.
- INANE (2014). *Open access, editorial standards and predatory publishing*. (Retrieved on February 8, 2016, from: <http://nursingeditors.com/inane-initiatives/open-access-editorial-standards/>).
- INANE Predatory Publishing Practices Collaborative (2014). *Predatory publishing: What editors need to know*. (Nurse author & editor, 24(3), 1. Retrieved on February 8, 2016 from <http://naepub.com/predatory-publishing/2014-24-3-2>).
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015). Predatory. Retrieved February 8, 2016 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/predatory>.
- Scholarly open access: Critical analysis of scholarly open access journals. Retrieved on February 12, 2016 from <https://scholarlyoa.com/> (2016).