



Pseudo-journals or Predatory journals

Pseudojornais ou predadores

Invitations sent by email offering opportunities to publish scientific articles in new journals and online journals has increased significantly. Current practice includes sending messages to many individuals with the promise of quick publication at a lower cost, compared to established scientific journals.

In general, they are specialty journals, many with titles similar to existing journals, but without scientific recognition. They are currently known as pseudo-journals or predators. They receive this name because, despite open access to the reader, they enter the academic environment with the main purpose of making financial profits through the processing of articles, without complying with the appropriate standards of an academic publication. Although they often simulate an editorial scientific structure, they publish every article submitted, without actual peer review, nor following recommended policies by publisher organizations such as the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) or similar entities¹.

The imminently mercantilist goals of these journals compromises scientific characteristics. By distancing itself from the best concepts of evidence-based medicine and reviewing peer-reviewed articles, it harms the advancement of science in favor of financial interests without bringing real scientific benefits to the author.

The change in payment practices of scientific articles is a reality in view of the need to implement open access to scientific articles. In this way, authors cost their publications instead of subscribers. Publishers are companies that aim for profit and, apart from this, the cost of a newspaper is real. Even in the digital era where printing costs are lower, there is a considerable and permanent investment in human resources for revision, editing, and assessment of quality evaluation. Predators, by not using these parameters, reduce their costs and seem to be attractive to the less informed author. What cannot occur is the search for publishing in journals only because of its lower cost. Obviously the most relevant point in publishing is the scientific impact of the Journal, its qualification by indexers and citation of the article. Predatory or pseudo-journals try to deceive the author with low-cost proposals and false expectations of scientific dissemination, which do not actually occur.

According to the World Association of Medical Editors there are now more than 8,000 active predatory journals and more than 420,000 articles published being about 75% of the authors coming from Asia and Africa². It is necessary to identify the characteristics of a journal with this profile to avoid sending a quality publication to a disqualified journal, with the loss of the actual scientific contribution. A Journal with a title never known before, not cited in indexers, published in remote areas and not linked to medical societies may be potentially predatory pseudo-journals. Some of them even create their own metrics and fictitious impact factors to mislead not only the authors but the scientific institutions to which they belong. Sometimes they create websites with similar visualization to the existing pages of legitimate journals, also with the intention of confusing the author, "capturing" their scientific study.

The reasons for the proliferation of these pseudo-journals are exactly the offer to young researchers, generally inexperienced, the possibility of rapid publication with low cost and false promise of exposition. For those who aim at the quantity of publications over quality it turns out to be a seemingly tempting proposition, certainly ineffective in the medium and long term.

REFERENCES

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