



Review Article

Kscien's list; a new strategy to hoist predatory journals and publishers

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ABSTRACT

The trend through which academia finances scientific publication has been changed into open access publishing, the latter is exploited by predatory journals and publishers. The aim of this paper is to review the current situation of predatory publishing and introduce Kscien's list of predatory journals and publishers. Kscien has recruited a special committee consisting of 23 young researchers. They are working unceasingly to keep the list refurbished, expose current tricks invented by the predators and guide authors. The list is designed to be updated daily. Currently, the criteria used to recognize predatory journals and publishers basically depend on the journal's misconduct, fabrication and inadequate peer review. Researches are ongoing to recapitulate more solid criteria with objective evidence to overcome the critics faced by Beall. Kscien's list has been proposed to replace the vanished Beall's list from the interior of the drawn region in fake journals and publishers.

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1. Introduction

As it is recognizable by many, the most crucial yardstick to appraise academics is publishing in scientific venues including journals and conferences [1]. The trend through which academia finances scientific publication has been changed into open access publishing (OAP) in most of the time. It is a contemporary idea that furnishes to the scholars, published work frankly – they are free to be read, saved, downloaded, copied and distributed. As far as it is openly feasible to all, studies allotted in this approach theoretically should have an outstanding impact, a character which is glamorous for both the journals and the authors. In this model, the article processing charges (APC) are taken from the researchers [2]. While the imagination of OA genre was an imperial idea that was presumed to bear a coup in scholarly publishing by spawning literature

freely handy to everyone, it has expeditiously grown into a quagmire and delivered a plethora of predatory journals and publishers. The term predatory is incessantly used in biology, it is delineated by Merriam-Webster glossary as intentional injury or exploit to others for intimate profit or gain. For the first time, Jeffrey Beall coined the term in 2010 referring to the journals and publishers with fraudulent peer review process [3]. Currently, several journals have been forged by amateurish, greedy, negligent, entrepreneurial entities, with the unique ambition of compiling fees and composing gains from the pockets of naive researchers [4]. Predatory journals menace scientists, science and the compelling communication of knowledge. Under the OAP model, each published paper means more earnings for the owners. Properly conducted peer review process repeatedly leads to rejection of the manuscripts and this contradicts the predators' interest leading to expelling scientific peer review process and neglecting reviewers' recommendations [5].

This catastrophic blemish in the OAP model has resulted in the distribution of countless papers that spoiled scientific literature. Also, it has led to the evolution of thousands of monetary open access publishers that aimed specifically to generate revenue

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regardless of the scientific aspect of the published articles. Differentiation between pseudoscience and science is becoming ambiguous and in some situation impossible [5].

The aim of this paper is to review the previous well known Beall's list and introduce modern Kscien's list, the alternative for the vanished blacklist.

1.1. Beall's list

Jeffery Beall for the first time started to establish his list in 2008 when he received numerous spam emails requesting for being an editorial board member. The list remained silent until mid-2010 in which it became widely reputable among academia. Beall's list indeed it composed of four main lists, was established by American librarian Jeffery Beall, an associated professor from Colorado University, Denver. The aim of the list as he announced, was to support and guide authors choosing legitimate journals for their works. The first list contained low quality and questionable publishers followed by the list of possible or probable predatory standalone journals, the third list was the set of the hijacked journals [6]. The latter means those deceptive journals with tricky names that mislead the authors making them confuse with the original genuine journals. The last list enumerated those fabricated journal metrics that were designed to betray authors by exhibiting numerous unqualified bogus metrics. Predatory journals and publishers became aware that many academics favor publishing their work in journals with high impact factors (IF). Journal IFs are computed annually by the notorious publisher, Thomson Reuters in a special custody report, Journal Citation Reports®. It is excessively choosy and many years should lapse for a journal to gain an IF. The predators overcame this issue by conceiving several phony, sham and crooked metrics to attract researchers' attention and haul them to their baits. Jeffery Beall listed those companies with faulty metrics under the title of Misleading Metrics [5]. The criteria used by Jeffery Beall to contain journals are unknown editors, repeated editors, absence of editors, absence of academic information about the editorial staff, scanty editorial board members, lack of transparent publishing process, large fleet of journals, deficient digital preservation, hiding article processing charge, incongruence of journal's name with its mission, the journal's name contradicting the country of origin, false impact factor, requesting peer review from unqualified reviewers, false claim of indexing, or indexing in resources without indexing services, excessive amount of plagiarism, image manipulation, and self-plagiarism, asking the authors for reviewers and subsequently transferring the manuscript to the reviewers without proper inspection of the academic performance of the suggested reviewers, publishing essays by laypeople, hiding office location or fake office location. Other signs include free emails, poorly developed website, plagiarism in author guides, broad journal name, insufficient contact information, unauthorized use of images, illustrations, and other academic works that are copyrighted, lack of retraction policy, absence of ISSN, DOI, and ISBN, excessive advertisement on its website, borrowing legitimacy from other organizations like links to legitimate conferences, meetings, and workshops, promising unusual quick peer review process, and mimicking journal title to other legitimate journal [7].

Although Beall's blog aided scholars and served scientific community attempting to prevent literature from been bombarded by improbably vetted researches, there were situations in which the blogger had been intensely criticized and backlash arose from his occasional decisions regarding few publishers like Frontiers. Beall's decision regarding journal inclusion has been blamed for being subjective and lacking solid parameters and depending mainly on Beall's intuition [8]. At the beginning of 2017, Beall's list vanished for reasons that have never been unveiled. The owner of the list

rebuffed to specify the determinants behind his decision and he dissolved the work abruptly when it was in its pinnacle. Kscien's list is schemed to reinstate the evanesced preceding list with flourishing the positive aspects and boosting the feeble points.

1.2. Kscien's list

The obligation to practice within a system discerned to participate in the number of scholarly publications and reach tenure requirement with minimal guidance from the institutions in developing countries have led several academics to fall in the traps of spurious peer-review journals who repeatedly spam authors' mailboxes with solicitation to submit their works to those masquerading journals seducing trustful authors through deceptive advertisements [4]. Jeffrey Beall opined that predatory journals and publishers intimidated the integrity of science by neglecting or faking peer review process and considered the latter as the cornerstone of scientific communication [5]. The tendency of the predators to mutate their strategies of deluding makes the emergence of an unceasingly updating blacklist like Kscien's list extremely fundamental. Kscien's list is a fruit of relentless struggle of Kscien organization to afford lucid tips on how to avoid predators who targeted literature solely for procurement of hefty evaluation fees.

Kscien organization is a non-profit, non-governmental organization established by young researchers solely to embed and improve research culture in developing countries. It is precisely aimed to bury predatory complications, maintain immaculate scientific communication, especially in developing countries. The latter has been recognized by many prosecutors to be more vulnerable to be beaten by the predatory journals and publishers than other regions of the world. Kscien's values are scientific approaches, respect, eminence, cooperation, exceptional quality, and competition. Its vision is the highest academic establishment for the development of scientific research and confronting fraudulent and predatory journals in the developing countries. Kscien has recruited a special committee consisting of 23 young researchers under the title of (Predatory List Committee (PLC)). The members were trained and passed through several specified workshops to expand their knowledge regarding predatory journals and publishers. They are working unceasingly to keep the list refurbished, expose current tricks invented by the predators and guide authors. The list is designed to be updated daily. Currently, the criteria used to recognize predatory journals and publishers basically depend on the journal's misconduct, fabrication and inadequate peer review. Researches are ongoing to recapitulate more solid criteria with objective evidence to overcome the critics faced by Beall. Like Beall's list, Kscien's list is subdivided into four lists including predatory publishers, predatory standalone journals, hijacked journals and misleading metrics. The central difference between Kscien's list and Beall's list is the criteria of determining predatory publishers and journals that are under research by PLC. Through this link (<http://kscien.org/predatory.php>) anyone can visit Kscien's list.

2. Conclusion

Predatory journals and publishers exploited open access publishing model, bombarded literature with pseudoscience. Beall's list was an eminent trial for avoiding predators but unfortunately it was suddenly closed. Kscien's list has been proposed to replace the vanished Beall's list from the interior of the drawn region in fake journals and publishers.

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Author contribution

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- Substantial contribution to the concept and design.
- Drafting the manuscript.
- Final approval of the manuscript.

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- Substantial contribution to the concept and design.
- Data collection and revising the manuscript.
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Conflicts of interest

None to be declared.

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