

# Survey on Issues of Predatory Journals among Public University Libraries in Malaysia

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## Introduction

The topics of predatory journals are becoming crucial and seriously being discussed by all academicians and researchers in higher institutions of Malaysia. Academicians and researchers from universities all over the world have become the target of predatory journals over the last few years. These false journals use deceptive practices to victimize academicians and researchers by promising them a guaranteed acceptance of their publication and ensuring both online and print. It trigger just because there is a persistent culture in the academic environment of “publish or perish” to climb the ladder in academic careers. This issues not only can take the academicians’, researcher’s or universities’ money but also their reputation. Libraries should also play an important role in educating and providing guides to their users in identifying whether a journal is a predatory journal. According to Grudniewicz et al., (2019), leading scholars and publishers from ten countries have agreed a definition of predatory publishing that can protect scholarship is “Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices” (p. 211).

## Significance of the study

This study will provide information regarding some best practices among university libraries in Malaysia to assist authors to protect their research, funding and reputation from theft and fraud by predatory journals. This study will identify the awareness among university libraries about predatory journals because predatory journals are a serious threat to the scholarly community in this era. This study will help to improve scholarly publishing literacy among academician/researchers and enhance the quality of research work by Malaysian universities.

## Methodology

This research is quantitative in nature and a survey questionnaire was created to obtain the necessary data. The survey consists of 8 questions and divided into 2 sections:

*Section A: Demographic information*      *Section B: Predatory Issue*

This survey was sent to the Malaysian Public University Libraries and focused on departments that are involved in research supporting services. A survey link was sent by email. The duration of the survey was from 24th June 2021 until 16th July 2021. Two reminder emails were sent during the course of the survey.



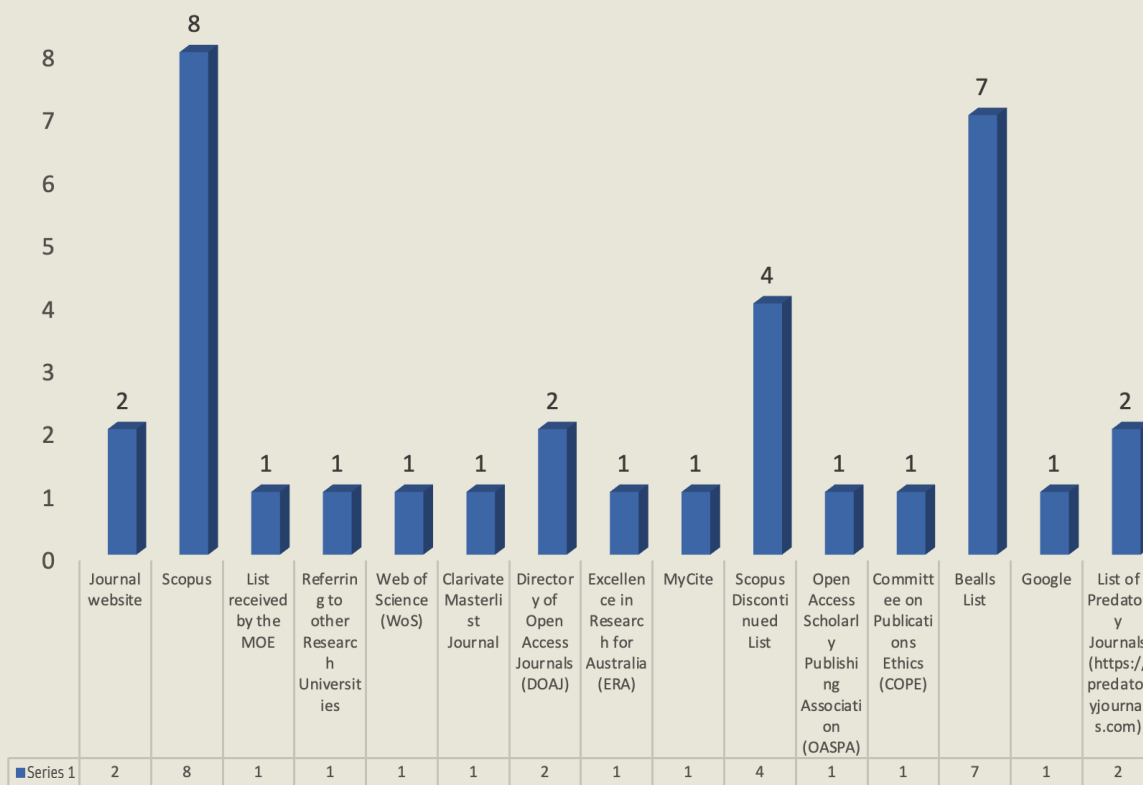
## Result

The result of the study is summarized in the table and graph below. The respondents were asked about the name of their library predatory guide and predatory journal guide/list links that enabled users to access. In regard to awareness activities/programs, the Research Department is the highest division involved in this awareness program. The results also show that most awareness activities/programs are awareness poster, workshop, promotion through social media and email.

Institution	Name of the predatory guide	Related URL	Name of the awareness activities/programs	Department / Division involved
UKM	Panduan ciri-ciri mengenalpasti jurnal predatory	-	Poster, seminar with publisher, briefing	Research Unit
UniMAS	List of Publishers/ Journals NOT Recognized by MOE	<a href="https://bibliometricservices.wordpress.com/">https://bibliometricservices.wordpress.com/</a>	Workshops organized by vendors, in the Library websites and portals	Academic Support Division, PeTARY
UiTM	-	<a href="https://library.uitm.edu.my/en/research-ptar/predatory-journals-ptar">https://library.uitm.edu.my/en/research-ptar/predatory-journals-ptar</a>	-	-
UTeM	-	<a href="https://beallslist.net">https://beallslist.net</a>	Inform researchers from time to time via email and research workshops	Research Support Unit
USM	-	<a href="https://referencephusm.wordpress.com/research-guide/predatory-blacklisted-journal-publishers/">https://referencephusm.wordpress.com/research-guide/predatory-blacklisted-journal-publishers/</a>	Periodic workshop under the title "Publishing Strategy for Researchers" & related video on youtube channel: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPG8oo0UpxXHHvjOP1N0THg/playlists">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPG8oo0UpxXHHvjOP1N0THg/playlists</a>	Reference Division & Research Support Division
UniMAP	Panduan Pemilihan Jurnal Berkualiti	<a href="http://dspace.unimap.edu.my/handle/123456789/71024">http://dspace.unimap.edu.my/handle/123456789/71024</a>	The library is in the process of providing a list of whitelists journals by subject areas as guide for researchers.	Library & Research Management Centre (RMC)
UPSI	-	-	Research Guide on the Library Portal, Library Research Skills Training such Scopus Series module, Quality and Impact Article Journal Ranking & Analysis for Research, Webinar Ask Librarian Series, Announcement Related to Journal Publication Poster, Top Journal index Scopus/ WoS, Top Author UPSI etc.	Academic Support Services Division/TNCPI Office/ Research and Innovation Management Centre (RMIC) Office
UTHM	-	-	Poster	Research Services Division
UPNM	-	-	"Co-organizing with Publishers or making announcements on existing organizations by publishers. For Example: Identifying Predatory Journals & Conferences by Cambridge University Press & The Challenges of Predatory Publishing organized Elsevier."	User Services Division
UMP	-	-	1. Using Beall's List as a Guide to Library Users 2. Sharing / Notification Related to Externally Organized Activities on This Matter	Cooperation between Education & Research Section and Data Management & Statistic Section, Library Department
USIM	-	-	Awareness poster	Research Section, Information Services Division
UniSZA	-	-	Researcher's Guide (Library Portal), awareness posters, videos, promotion through social media and email	Bahagian Pengurusan Perkhidmatan

Table: Library predatory journal guide, awareness activities and department involved in the activities

The graph shows the predatory resources they often used / referred to. Scopus (8) is in the first rank of predatory resources often used/referred. It was followed by Beall's List (7) and Scopus Discontinued List (4). There are also other predatory resources which are popular such as referring to the journal website itself, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and List of Predatory Journals website. The less predatory resources referred are the list received by the Ministry of Education, Web of Science, Clarivate Masterlist Journal, Excellent in Research for Australia (ERA), MyCite, Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association (OASPA), Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE), Google and referring to other Research Universities.



Graph: Predatory resources often used/referred

**Conclusion and recommendation**

Predatory journals threaten the integrity of the scientific system by undermining the aims of open access and causing misunderstanding. It also can be upsetting because they contradict the principles of honesty and scientific integrity. Academic and research institutions must be more aware of their responsibilities in fighting fraud and establishing proactive policies to prevent predatory journals. Another important aspect would be the development of effective training programs on the ethics of science and responsible writing for university students and researchers. Efforts to counter predatory publishing must be continuous and flexible. The threat is unlikely to go away as long as institutions utilize a scholar's number of publications as a factor for graduation or career advancement.

**RESOURCES**

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