

Oncology Under Attack by Predatory Journals: A Global Survey

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Background

- Clinical oncology and cancer research are experiencing rapid growth to improve patients' care.
- This field is, unfortunately, infiltrated by predatory journals (PJs) that are damaging all areas of science as a dark side of the Open Access Movement.
- To our knowledge, only one survey-based study has previously addressed this issue among oncologists, with a geographical restriction to those practicing in Austria and Germany (*Richtig et al.* 2019 ESMO Open)
- There is limited knowledge on predatory journals in oncology, and no global study has assessed factors associated with this issue of research integrity.

Results

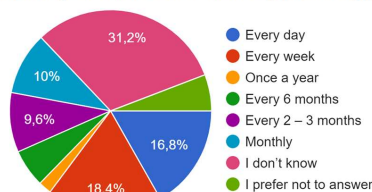
Survey coverage



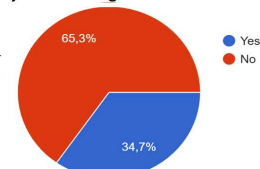
60 countries covered including 35 LMICs

Characteristics (n=426)	%
Age: 38.54 ± 8.5 (Male-to-female ratio: 0.98)	
Academic degree	
MD	62.9
MD/PhD	17.1
PhD	14.8
Other	5.2
Specialty	
Medical Oncology	41.7
Radiation Oncology	11.7
Cancer Research (basic or translational)	8.4
Hematology	6.5
Surgical Oncology	6.3
Other	25.4
Income level of participants' country	
LMIC	65.3
HIC	34.7
Academic level	
Specialist doctors	53.5
Professors	12.9
Resident physicians	11.5
Others	22.1
Publication record	
Yes	78.1
No	21.9
Primary institution	
Public	70.4
Private	15.2
Both	14.5
Involvement of participants' institutions in oncology research	
Yes	76.7
No	17.3

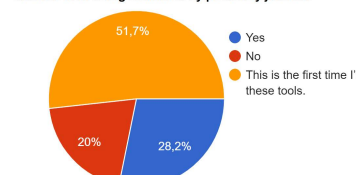
Frequency of article solicitations by predatory journals



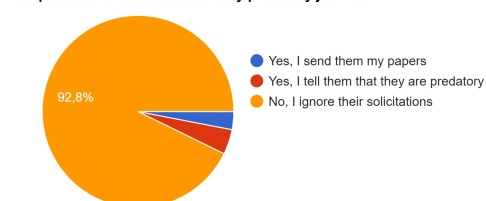
Invitations to publish in predatory journals using social networks



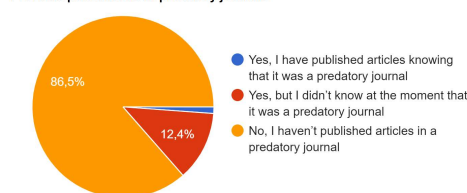
Use of the Beall's list and "Think Check Submit" to prevent authors from being scammed by predatory journals



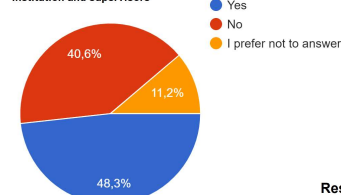
Response to email solicitations by predatory journals



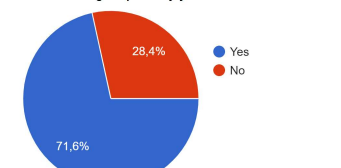
Previous publications in predatory journals



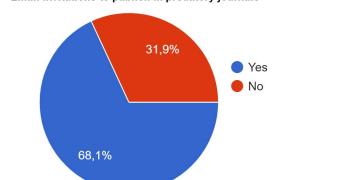
Pressure to publish from academic institution and supervisors



Previous knowledge on predatory journals



Email invitations to publish in predatory journals

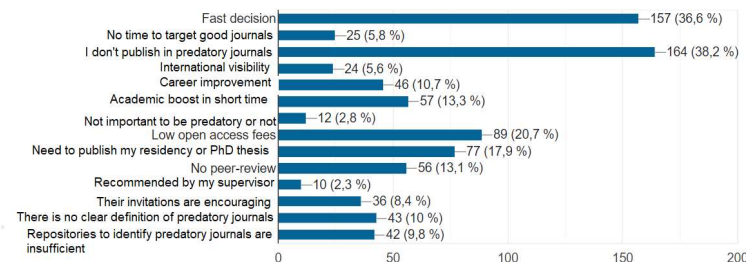


The first author of this research provides free training on predatory publishing and research integrity using distance education. If you are interested to organize an event to increase awareness on this issue, Please contact us.

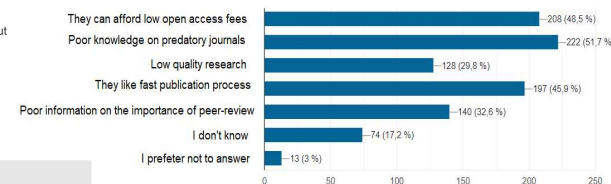
Methods

- We used an anonymized 29 questions-based survey to investigate oncologists' knowledge on predatory publishing across oncology specialties in a cohort of participants from all the globe with a particular focus on low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).
- Descriptive statistics and logistic regression were used to describe surveyees' responses and to identify risk factors for predatory publishing as appropriate.
- The null hypotheses (H0) were that the proportions of responses to the questions would not differ between oncologists and cancer researchers located in LMICs and high-income countries (HICs).
- CROSS guidelines were used to report the survey data before publishing.

Reasons that encourage oncologists to submit to predatory journals



Why do predatory journals target scientists, particularly from developing countries?



Predictive factors of publishing in predatory journals based on multivariable logistic regression:

1-Responding to article solicitations of predatory journals:
OR=3.56; 95% CI: 1.73-7.33, p=0.001

2-Being an oncologist in an LMIC:
OR=2.11; 95% CI: 1.05-4.21, p=0.034

3-Having experience in academic publishing did not reduce the risk of publishing in predatory journals (p=0.008)

Conclusion

- As reported widely in other fields, predatory publishing is also an issue in global oncology.
- Our international survey identified actionable risk factors of vulnerability to predatory publishing, to inform research capacity-building in LMICs.
- This provides the rationale to build training programs to increase awareness on this issue and mark a global change.

For collaboration:

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