

Online Journals : the good, the bad and the ugly

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In last few years, technology has impacted academics and education in a big way. Journals and publications are affected the most with this. The technology has made it easy to host a journal and publish an e-journal. This has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that now even small societies can start their own Journal at low cost and maintain it without crippling cost that is part of agreement with big publishers. It is like academics has been allowed to slip through the tight claws of big publishers. Many established journals were getting too much content and would often reject without review. With new journals coming up the authors have avenues to submit their work and get timely publication of their articles. Many new journals also provided a lot of assistance to authors to write articles and this has again helped new academicians. Again different kind of journals are being started including journals dedicated to reviews and surgical techniques and case reports. This has definitely increased the forum available to young researcher. IJPO too is a product of this technological advancement. At times where only three paediatric orthopaedic journals existed in world, IJPO was started with help of orthopaedic research group and has received great response in last three years.

However this technological advancement is not without disadvantage which has allowed mushrooming of predatory publishers. The predatory publishers have grown in recent years and have grown bolder. Not a week goes by where we editors do not receive invitation from these journals soliciting articles from us and promising fast and rapid publication within days. We are sure many gullible young academicians are falling prey to these journals. This is an alarming trend and something needs to be done urgently to counter this. One of the most important part of this will be to inform and educate the academic community about these journals and their practices. Bealle's List was an important list of predatory journals but we can ourselves use simple set of rules to identify these journals. Firstly only predatory journals will solicit your articles and ask for you submit to them. Its only these journals that will promise to publish articles within days of submission. There will hardly be any peer review. Also when you read published articles in these journals, there are lot of spelling error, poor formats, content published as in raw files. Also most of these journals will have weird names that would make them eligible to accept any article in medical field. One of the major hurdles with these journals is that once you have submitted your article to these journals, you cant retract your article. If you wish to retract, you have to pay money to them to retract your own article. This is the ugliest aspect of these publishers and something every researcher will be afraid of. However, if you face such problem, please let us know and we can help you with that

As more and more of us become aware of advantages and disadvantages of online publishing we will be well equipped to deal with these issue and will be able to make best use of these opportunities

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