

**GENERAL SIR JOHN KOTELAWALA DEFENCE
UNIVERSITY**

POLICY ON PUBLICATIONS



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1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to educate and inform faculty, staff and students of Kotelawala Defence University, about the practices of “Predatory “publishers and to provide criteria for researchers where to publish the output of their research work.

Predatory journals/ publishers, also known as Questionable journals/ publishers, are journals that lack academics credibility, honesty and use aggressive procedures for recruiting and nominating reviewers and accepting articles for the publication. Publishers of these journals are more interested in making money rather than following an acceptable method of reviewing articles. The content of the articles published in these journals are non- reliable and misleads the readers.

Legitimate publishers normally do not accept the articles which are submitted before. Hence submitting research work in a predatory article is a risk and may have serious negative consequences such as; fake peer review undermines the scientific conversation, publishing in a low-quality journal can make someone research harder to find and less likely to be used by others, researchers could be scammed and lose their work.

Hence KDU developed this policy to protect its staff and students from publishing their research work in predatory journals.

2. Scope

This policy is applicable to all the research work produced/ developed or created at KDU with the support of the University and is extended to all individuals (academic staff and students), and applied to all programmes supported by KDU, UH-KDU and KDU affiliated institutions.

3. Acceptable list of Journals

In the recent past university academics of Sri Lanka, were encouraged to carry out more research activities, through the inclusion of research allowance to their salary and giving a higher weightage for research publication as a key factor in getting promotions. KDU also introduced a support scheme for publication in high impact journals to support publication of research findings by academic staff of KDU in open access high impact index journals. In order to evaluate/ approve such applications it is a mandatory requirement to check the acceptability of the journal to which the publication belongs to.

It is difficult to prepare a list of journals which are considered as Predatory journals due to new predatory journals are starting frequently, some predatory journals change their names at the middle of the course when they are exposed as a predatory journal, existing predatory journals may shut down at once. Hence the KDU decided to come up with a list of acceptable journals hereinafter referred to as the “**White List of Journals**”.

All academics of KDU are requested not to include any predatory publications in their CVs, KDU-web profiles, other academic profiles (google scholar, scopus etc.) and in applications for promotion, research allowances, reimbursement for publications etc. With effect from January 2022, all applications for promotions for senior lecturer, associated professor, professor, senior professor, will be screened for predatory publications and may be rejected or requested to resubmit after withdrawing the identified fake publications. Withdrawing a publication from a predatory journal, might involve a cost equivalent to double of the payment charge for the publication. The same will be applied for applications submitted for research allowance, applications for other financial assistance schemes on research related activities provided from KDU and applications for awards, etc.

4. White list of Journals

Staff of KDU are encouraged to go for the publications categorized under category I and II. The purpose of including the category III here, is to validate the research papers already published by the academics in journals of category III. However, the academics are discouraged to select category III journals published in other countries also the journals included in the Beall’s list. More guidance on selecting a standard journal is given in the later sections of this document.

Category I - Journal indexed in

- I. Science Citation Index Expanded (™) (Web of Science) (Clarivate Analytics)
- II. www.scopus.com (Elsevier publishers)
- III. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/m/pubmed (PubMed, MEDLINE)
- IV. Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) (Clarivate Analytics)
- V. Social Sciences Citation Index® (Web of Science) (Clarivate Analytics)
- VI. Arts and Humanities Citation Index® (Web of Science) (Clarivate Analytics)
- VII. Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA)
- VIII. Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA)
- IX. Education Resource Information Centre (ERIC)
- X. Engineering Index

Category II - Journals which are not included in the above citation indices, but included in world accepted “journal ranking system” such as

- I. Clarivate analytics master journal list
- II. SciMago Journal list
- III. Directory of open access journals (DOAJ)
- IV. ABDC Journal quality list
- V. Journal under ‘Ubiquity Press’ (published journals, hosted journals and Journals of Partner network)
- VI. Journals listed in “Sri Lankan Journals Online”

Category III – Non-predatory journals which are not included in any of the above two categories, but falls into following:

- I. Standard (local and foreign) journals published in English medium, but not listed under any of the above two categories
- II. Standard journals published in local languages (i.e., Sinhala or Tamil)
- III. Standard journals published in other languages **with an abstract in English.**

5. Features of a standard Journal – Category III

Standards/ Features	The way to check	Remarks
There should be a genuine ISSN number for the journal (Not ISBN)	Web search through https://portals.issn.org/	This is just to distinguish periodicals from books and occasional publications. However, it should be noted that in addition to standard journals, conference proceedings as well as fake journals also processing ISSN numbers.
Published periodically (At least one issue per year)	Periodicity (i.e., Volume numbers and number of issued pre volume over the time) can be checked through archives in the journal homepage.	There may be exceptional cases particularly in some journals published few decades ago, as they were published only as hardcopies and the periodicity may not be maintained. Such cases can be considered separately, on request.
There should be an authentic editorial board with senior scholars.	Profiles of the editorial board accessible through the journal homepage.	Some fake or predatory journals include the names of world renowned researchers in to their editorial boards without the consent of the researcher. It is true that this cannot be observed or found without proper search. However, if there is a doubt, it is possible to contact the relevant researcher and check.

Reviewers should be separated from editorial board members.	In general, editor send editorial comments separately, with two review reports, to the author	In some periodicals as magazines, the articles received are reviewed by the editorial board members. It is not considered as a 'peer review'
Submitted papers should be subjected to a peer review, at least by two reviewers.	The most reliable to check whether there is a proper peer review process or not, it is to observe the quality of the review reports.	The authors should keep the review reports/ email correspondences relevant to their publication, to be submitted for inspection, if requested.
Archives of review reports on manuscripts submitted should be maintained by the journal	If requested, the editors of the journal should be able to provide the review reports, in order to prove the standard of the journal. This is particularly valid for the local journals under category III.	However, archives of review reports may not be available for papers published several years ago for the access by the authors.
All papers in each and every issue should follow the same format	Through the homepage of the journals	Progressive and gradual increases are accepted
Almost no obvious syntactic and spelling errors in the text or journal website.	Can be checked by inspecting research papers published, through the journal website.	The authors should be responsible for checking for grammatical/ spelling errors in the journal avoid such journals when publishing their work.
Format of the reference list is standard and uniform not only throughout any paper, but also in all the papers in all the issues	Can be checked by inspecting research papers published, through the journal web site.	The authors should be responsible for checking for referencing style(s) in the journal before deciding to submit a research article to journals.
Article processing/ publishing feet	Through the instructions to the authors by the journal and/ or through email communication	Many of the standard journal also charge a fee to publish a paper. However, if any journal requests a fee for the research article, without reviewing the paper properly and without giving satisfactory editorial service, authors should be vigilant on such journals.

6. When a publication is in a Journal of category III

6.1 When including a publication in a journal of category III, for promotions, allowances, awards, and other financial assistances, additional supporting documentation should be submitted with regards to the journal information as follows. This evidence needs to be approved and verified by the Dean of the Faculty before forwarding the application to the relevant committee.

1. Journal Name
2. Copy of the paper (need a pdf version in the journal format)
3. DOI (if available online)
4. Email communications with the journal since the submission of the manuscript till the acceptance of the article, and the review reports of the manuscript.

Note: This is not applicable for journals of category I and II.

6.2 In an instance where a journal not being identified as fake/ predatory by the time the article is published, but identified as a predatory journal during the process of evaluating applications (research allowances, promotions etc), the applicant is requested to submit evidence to prove that the said journal was not fake by the time of publication.

7. Guidelines to identify fake or Predatory Journals

7.1 Check whether the journal can be found in the DOAJ and JCR master list

Many predatory journals are claiming that they are indexed by DOAJ and JCR Master List, while they are not. It is better to check whether a journal you want to publish is telling the truth. If a journal is indexed by JCR or/and DOAJ, that is usually a very good indicator that the journal is not predatory.

7.2 Look for below weaknesses in journal website

- Journal Name covers a broader area or does not adequately reflect the origin
- Begins operations with larger number of journals, often using a common template to create the home page of each journal
- Poor use of language; often grammar and spelling mistakes can be observed in the home page as well as the text in the publications showing a low professional standard. Language in the home page target authors; included misleading and boastful language
- No mechanism/ policy to prevent author misconduct such as plagiarism and image manipulations and sometimes the publications are locked preventing it harder to check for plagiarism.
- No or lack of information about manuscript handling process
- Provide less / no information about author fees and other expenditures to be paid by the author. Many of the standard journals also charge a fee for the publications. However, there are journals which request for a publication fee without reviewing the paper properly and without giving satisfactory editorial service. Better to avoid such journals.

7.3 Check for the peer review process and publication timeline

Most of the predatory journals tend to accept the articles for publication within a few days. Time from submission to review is unusually shorter; also, the reviewer's comments are not specific to the

subject of the article. Most of the time the journal team send only general feedback such as tabulating, editing mistakes etc. to the authors.

7.4 Check the journal Editorial board

Members of the editorial board of a quality journal are normally professionals with many years of experience. But when it comes to the predatory journals, they tend to have a list of editors, usually with low profiles or names of higher scholars included without their permission. It is better to check the professional online profiles of members of the editorial board through their institution page, Linked In or research gate to find out whether they actually serve as a member of the editorial board of the journal.

7.5 Number of volumes / issues

In general, the number of volumes, issues per volume and the approximate number of papers in one issue is a constant in a legitimate journal. If those factors are changed frequently the quality of the journal is questionable. Also, the format of each paper in each issue of a legitimate journal is unique, whereas this may be varied in the predatory journals.

7.6 Use of Journal evaluation tools

To assist creditability of the journals, ready-made systems available online can be used.

Example https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/librarian_pubs/40/

Hint:

All academics of KDU are encouraged to,

- 1. Choose a journal of category I as the first choice.**
- 2. Choose a journal of category II as the second choice.**
- 3. If choose a journal of category III,**
 - Carefully read the sections 5 – 7 in this document.**
 - Make sure the chosen journal fulfills the features listed under section 5.**
 - Make sure the chosen journal does not have the features listed under section 7.**
 - Avoid choosing a journal/publisher listed in the Beall's list of potential predatory journals.**