What really are predatory practices?:

- It’s basically a “pay for your publication” based unethical business model disguised as a scientific practice employed by fraudulent organizations such as predatory journals and conferences.

- They circulate scientific findings without peer review and exploiting researchers with the lure of easy success.

According to Nature, 2019:

“Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by:

1) false or misleading information
2) deviation from best editorial and publication practices
3) a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices.”

Signs of a Predatory Journal: The Red Flags

- Promises unrealistic publication timeline (Sometimes within 24 hrs) in exchange of a Article processing charge.
- Has a name identical to a reputed Journal. Like “NaturePub” resembling “Nature”.
- Acceptance without peer-review (though claims to be peer reviewed)
- No quality control; poor quality
- Little to no copy editing and proof-reading
- Previously published articles are most of the time not aligned with/ irrelevant to the aim and goal of the journal.
- Unprofessional sometimes “flattering” emails, often using gmail/yahoo account, requesting to submit manuscript or serve on editorial board.
- Spelling mistakes and typos in published articles
- Poorly made fake website.

FAKE EDITORIAL BOARD !!!
FAKE IMPACT FACTOR !!!

Why is this practice so harmful?

- Permanent stain on academic reputation.
- Cancellation of scholarships or job.
- Circulation of flawed research in scientific community.
- Corrupting the scientific culture of peer-review without which reproducibility of results can be questioned.
- Waste of money and effort- work disregarded by the academic community.
- Medical science is most vulnerable with potential risks to human lives.
- It provides easy pathway for promotions and accolades for incompetent and unethical academic denying opportunities to better qualified and well deserved researchers.

Fake Science ===> Real science

How to traverse this minefield of predatory journals: The solution

- Researchers need to be educated on how to identify predatory journals. Using the golden rule:

THINK
Check
Submit

- Research institutions need to provide incentives for their researchers to publish in legitimate journals.
- Funding agencies need to audit where research they are funding is being published and disincentivize further submissions to predatory journals.

Let’s create awareness against predatory practice