

Shifting from 'Predatory Journals' to 'Non-Recommended Journals': A Proposal to Reduce Conflicts and Promote Ethical Discourse

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Background

- The term "predatory journals" has been widely used to describe unethical or deceptive publishing practices.
- To help researchers identify such journals, several lists exist, including Beall's List, Cabells Predatory Reports, the Kscien List, the Early Warning List, the Open Access Journal List, and the International Journal Blacklist.
- The use of this term has often led to significant conflicts and legal challenges for individuals and organizations addressing these practices. Notable examples include the legal and personal harassment faced by Jeffrey Beall, the founder of "Beall's List," who ultimately discontinued his work, and the lawsuits and threats directed at institutions such as the University of Montreal and initiatives like Cabells Predatory Reports.
- These challenges highlight the risks and professional backlash that researchers and organizations encounter when labeling journals as "predatory".

Recommendation

- To mitigate these conflicts, we propose that the term "predatory journals" be replaced with "non-recommended journals."
- This alternative nomenclature adopts a neutral and non-accusatory tone while still conveying the need for caution.
- The term "non-recommended" avoids direct allegations of unethical behavior, reducing the likelihood of legal and professional disputes.
- By adopting this terminology, institutions and researchers can continue to address the issue of low-quality or exploitative journals while minimizing the risks associated with confrontational language.
- This shift may encourage broader participation in efforts to promote ethical publishing practices and protect academic integrity.