

Breaking News

(Publication Ethics)

New corruption detected: Bogus impact factors compiled by fake organizations

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We read with great interest a paper in the journal "Nature" in which Declan Butler reported two sham journals that were scamming authors (1). Similarly, an article entitled "Scientific Articles Accepted (Personal Checks, Too)" was published in The New York Times recently (2). During the last two years, tens of predatory journals and furious publishers have been identified. The fake publishers, bogus journals, and hijackers of print-only journals have created numerous fake websites to earn money from non-reviewed research articles (1, 2). Their targets are authors who are looking for rapid acceptance from journals that are indexed by Thomson Reuters. However, in their newest attempts, the academic cyber criminals have introduced their newest masterpiece, i.e., targeting both authors and real journals through bogus companies that compile fake impact factors for journals. The cyber criminals used the following names for their fake metric products: Global Impact Factor (GIF) compiled by <http://www.globalimpactfactor.com>, Universal Impact Factor (UIF) introduced by <http://www.uifactor.org>, Journal Impact Factor (JIF) measured by <http://www.jifactor.com>, and the so-called revolutionary metric product for evaluating scientific journals (Sjournals) at <http://www.sjournals.net>. The above-mentioned scams are all about the same, and it is obvious that the GIF and Sjournals Index websites are very similar, as if they were created by the same person or that information was copied and pasted from one to the other. The JIF was used by the fake "Global Institute for Scientific Information" (GISI), which was designed to be mistaken for the former Institute for Scientific Information (ISI); in this case the cyber criminals even copied some lines from the evaluation methodology used by Index Copernicus, a reputable company in Poland. It seems that there is an urgent need to warn both authors and publishers of the progressive threat to the validity and reliability of published works.

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