

Letter from the Editors: An extended Plagiarism has reported to the ScienceOpen. Predatory Publishers and Predatory Conferences

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Abstract: - We found a plagiarized article and the web site ScienceOpen will remove the plagiarized article soon. The original article has been published in WSEAS, [3]. We have already reported the plagiarism to ScienceOpen, emphasizing the urgency. We provided clear evidence: comparison of texts, DOI links, and publication dates proving WSEAS published it first. We have informed the original authors about the plagiarism so they can take action. WSEAS might have legal or procedural steps to follow in such cases.

We will send also our report to COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics). We might consider publicly documenting the case (e.g., via an academic blog, ResearchGate, or even social media) to remove the plagiarized material. This paper highlights also the growing issue of hackers and scammers exploiting the reputable name of WSEAS to falsely advertise illegitimate conferences as official events. These fraudulent activities typically involve creating misleading websites, sending fake emails, and distributing promotional materials that mimic the branding and structure of WSEAS conferences. Their aim is to deceive researchers, authors, and academics into believing they are participating in authentic WSEAS events, while in reality, these conferences are entirely illegitimate. Scammers often offer paper presentation invitations, promise publication in WSEAS journals, or advertise non-existent high-profile speakers, all while charging excessive registration fees and failing to uphold academic standards. These deceptive practices can lead to financial loss, damaged reputations, and the publication of subpar or plagiarized research. In response, WSEAS actively combats these fraudulent activities by issuing warnings, collaborating with authorities, and providing guidance to help researchers identify legitimate events. Researchers are encouraged to carefully verify any conference or publication claiming affiliation with WSEAS to avoid falling victim to these scams.

Key-Words: - Predatory Practices, Plagiarism, WSEAS, Predatory Conferences and Predatory Journals.

1 Problem with Plagiarism

Plagiarism in academic journals and conferences is an important issue that has significant implications for the integrity of scholarly research and the reputation of academic institutions [1], [2]. The rise of digital content and the ease of access to

information online have made it easier for individuals to plagiarize without proper attribution. However, this has also led to an increase in awareness and detection methods aimed at combating plagiarism in the academic world.

Plagiarism undermines the core values of academic integrity, which rely on originality, ethical conduct, and proper acknowledgment of sources. When individuals copy others' work without credit, they not only violate intellectual property rights but also deprive the original authors of their due recognition. This erosion of trust can lead to a decline in the credibility of academic publications, causing researchers to question the reliability and authenticity of journals and conferences. In turn, this can diminish the overall value of academic contributions. For researchers and authors, being accused of plagiarism can result in severe professional consequences, including reputational damage, loss of credibility, retraction of published articles, and even legal action in extreme cases. These negative outcomes can hinder their career progression and diminish the value of their work. Furthermore, plagiarized research can contribute to the spread of misinformation and false claims in the academic community, potentially impacting scientific progress and advancements in various fields. Academic journals and conferences are the cornerstone of scholarly communication and knowledge dissemination. When plagiarism occurs, it can significantly damage the reputation of the publishing platforms and organizations involved. Journals and conferences that fail to implement robust plagiarism detection mechanisms or are seen as lenient in addressing plagiarism cases risk being perceived as untrustworthy. This can deter high-quality researchers from submitting their work to these venues, ultimately reducing the journal's or conference's prestige and impact in the academic community. To address the growing concern of plagiarism, many academic journals and conferences have adopted plagiarism detection tools, such as Turnitin, iThenticate, and Copyscape, to screen submitted manuscripts for any signs of copied content. These tools compare the manuscript against an extensive database of published works, helping to identify instances of plagiarism, even if the copied text has been paraphrased. Furthermore, editors and reviewers are increasingly trained to recognize subtle forms of plagiarism, such as self-plagiarism, where an author submits their previously published work without proper citation. Beyond technological solutions, academic institutions and organizations must foster a culture of ethics and integrity among researchers, authors, and publishers. This can include clear guidelines on proper citation practices, workshops on academic writing, and policies for addressing plagiarism. It is also crucial to educate new generations of scholars about the importance of originality and proper attribution,

helping them understand the long-term value of their own intellectual contributions.

Researchers themselves play a crucial role in combating plagiarism. They are responsible for ensuring the integrity of their own work, including proper citation of sources and avoiding any form of intellectual dishonesty. By adhering to the highest ethical standards, researchers can help to maintain the trust and credibility of the academic community. Additionally, by actively reporting instances of plagiarism when they come across them, researchers can contribute to creating a safer and more transparent academic environment.

Ethical publishing practices are essential for ensuring that journals and conferences remain credible. Publishing houses must be vigilant in their efforts to uphold academic standards, including conducting thorough peer reviews, maintaining transparent and impartial editorial practices, and promoting fair and honest research practices. This includes taking swift and decisive action when instances of plagiarism are discovered, whether through article retractions, public apologies, or other corrective measures.

Unfortunately, we found that after being published in WSEAS, the article was stolen by an unknown person 19 days later, copied word for word (100% plagiarism), and published on the website ScienceOpen.com.

The ScienceOpen will remove the article:
<https://www.scienceopen.com/hosted-document?doi=10.14293/S2199-1006.1.SOR-PPDGIWU.v1>

which is 100% plagiarism from:
<https://wseas.com/journals/electronics/2021/a385103-1156.pdf> [3]

We explained to ScienceOpen by keeping a plagiarized article on Scienceopen.com, they are insulting both WSEAS and the original authors. ScienceOpen has promised to remove the article.

This is a very serious issue, and both the author of the original article and WSEAS will inform our lawyers as well as the academic community.

We sent them email and we told them to remove the

<https://www.scienceopen.com/hosted-document?doi=10.14293/S2199-1006.1.SOR-PPDGIWU.v1>

ScienceOpen is a serious platform and we believe that they will remove it very soon.

We will submit a DMCA Takedown Request, either through the platform itself or via Google, to remove the plagiarized article from search engines.

2 Problem with Predatory Conferences

At the same time some hackers have used the names of WSEAS and they advertize their conferences as they are WSEAS Conferences, So, there have been instances where scammers and hackers have misused the name of WSEAS to deceive researchers and authors. These fraudulent activities typically involve:

1. Predatory Conferences and Predatory Journals

Some Scammers created fake websites or emails that resemble WSEAS and invite researchers to submit papers. They often charge high fees for publication without real peer review. These fake conferences sometimes never take place or are of very poor quality. But these fake and predatory conferences does not have any relation with the WSEAS. Only the conferences that have link from the official web site: www.wseas.com are related to the WSEAS. Conferences that claim to be WSEAS conferences but do not have a link from the official website www.wseas.com are fake and junk and have no affiliation with WSEAS.

2. Phishing Emails from Junk Conferences and Junk Journals.

Some hackers send emails pretending to be from WSEAS editors, asking for login credentials, financial details, or payments. These emails might include fake "Call for Papers" or promises of fast publication. So, only the conferences that have link from the official web site: www.wseas.com are related to the WSEAS. Conferences that claim to be WSEAS conferences but do not have a link from the official website www.wseas.com are predatory and have no affiliation with WSEAS.

3. Impersonation of WSEAS Officials.

Fraudsters have used the names of WSEAS editors or conference chairs to gain credibility.

They sometimes request money for indexing or fast-tracking papers—something WSEAS does not do.

4. Fake Websites from Bogus Conferences and Bogus Journals

There have been cases where scammers set up look-alike websites that mimic WSEAS but lead to fraudulent payment gateways. These websites steal researchers' data or charge them for non-existent services.

How to Stay Safe?

- a) Always verify WSEAS conferences and journals through the official website www.wseas.com.
- b) Be cautious if you receive unsolicited emails demanding urgent payments or personal data.
- c) Check Scopus or Web of Science to confirm whether a journal is indexed as claimed.
- d) Contact WSEAS directly if you suspect fraud.

3 Conclusion

We recently discovered that an article published on the ScienceOpen platform has been plagiarized from a paper originally published in WSEAS. Despite our efforts to address the issue, ScienceOpen has not yet removed the plagiarized content from their site. In response, we promptly reported the plagiarism to ScienceOpen, making it clear that this is an urgent matter. As part of our communication, we provided incontrovertible evidence, including side-by-side comparisons of the plagiarized text and the original article, alongside the DOI links and publication dates, which clearly demonstrate that WSEAS published the original work before it appeared on ScienceOpen.

Additionally, we have informed the original authors of the plagiarized article so they are aware of the situation and can take their own appropriate actions. We believe that WSEAS, being the publisher of the original article, has the legal rights and procedural steps to address this violation of intellectual property and academic integrity.

As a further step in addressing this issue, we will be submitting a formal report to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), which sets standards for ethical publishing practices. COPE provides a structured process for handling such violations, and we hope that their involvement will expedite the removal of the plagiarized article and ensure proper

consequences for the individuals or institutions involved.

If, despite our efforts and the involvement of COPE, the plagiarized article remains on ScienceOpen, we will have no choice but to consider publicly documenting this case. We might share the details via academic channels such as a dedicated blog, ResearchGate, or even social media, which would allow us to raise awareness about the incident and apply public pressure on ScienceOpen to take the necessary corrective actions. Our goal is to protect academic integrity and to ensure that plagiarism does not go unaddressed.

Simultaneously some hackers and scammers have exploited the reputable name of WSEAS to falsely advertise their own conferences as if they were official WSEAS events. These fraudulent activities typically involve the creation of misleading websites, fake emails, and promotional materials that mimic the official branding and structure of WSEAS conferences. The intent behind these actions is to deceive unsuspecting researchers, authors, and academics into believing that they are engaging with an authentic WSEAS event, when, in fact, the conferences are entirely illegitimate.

These activities often involve scammers offering "invitations" to present papers, promising publication in WSEAS journals, or advertising "high-profile" speakers that are not actually associated with the organization. In some cases, these hackers may charge exorbitant registration fees, offering little to no value in return, or even publishing subpar or plagiarized content without proper peer review or ethical standards.

For many researchers, these fraudsters can be convincing, as they mimic the formal language and appearance of legitimate WSEAS events. Unfortunately, this can lead to financial loss, damage to reputations, and the publication of low-quality research, which tarnishes the academic credibility of the authors involved.

WSEAS is fully aware of these fraudulent activities and takes steps to combat them. The organization continuously works to protect its name and reputation, issuing warnings to the academic community and providing guidance on how to identify legitimate WSEAS conferences and events. In cases where these scams are reported, WSEAS collaborates with authorities and organizations such as conference watchdogs to ensure that the

perpetrators are held accountable and that researchers are protected from such deceitful practices.

It is important for researchers to carefully verify the legitimacy of any conference or publication claiming to be associated with WSEAS. This includes checking the official WSEAS website for event listings, reaching out to WSEAS representatives for confirmation, and reviewing any associated publication or review process to ensure it aligns with recognized academic standards.

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