Predatory publishing as a case of symbolic violence: A critical English for academic purposes approach

Saman Ebadi and Gerannaz Zamani

Abstract: A rising number of university faculty and students in Iran are falling prey to predatory publishers, that is, publishing academic low-quality and unethical research papers. There are increasing demands on researchers and students from both local and national authorities to publish widely. Because of the increasing pressure put on students and their professors to publish in national and international journals, it is often tempting for them to take the shortest possible means to get their papers published, which is predatory publishing. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate why publishing in predatory journals has been increasing among higher education students. In this article, we drew on Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence as well as critical English for academic purposes approach (CEAP) to demonstrate how domination and violence are reproduced in higher education which tempts students to resort to predatory publishing. To delve into students’ perceptions regarding predatory publishing, a structured questionnaire was constructed by the researchers and distributed among 52 PhD and MA students. The findings of his study assert that universities and professors can exert symbolic violence that silence students’ voices. The exhortation of this study involves...
pervading right analysis and critical pedagogy into the learning system in order to
democratize higher education institutions and to enact meaningful and genuine
pupil engagement in the process of article publication.

Subjects: Social Sciences; Behavioral Sciences; Education; Humanities; Language &
Literature

Keywords: predatory publishing; symbolic violence; CEAP; right analysis

1. Introduction

In the academic community, exchange of knowledge in various disciplines is imperative. Since the
1980s, online open access publishing journals have appeared, which has been of great help in
spreading academic knowledge. Open access journals are accessible to the readers free of charge
to access, copy, and cite. In conjunction with these reputable journals, a number of pay-to-publish
journals that do not follow acceptable publishing standards appeared. In 2008, the term “pre-
datory journals” was named by Jeffrey Beall, an American academic, researcher, and librarian
(Butler, 2013). Predatory publishing is defined as unethical, low-quality, substandard academic
publishing that is generally Open Access (OA) (Berger, 2017). Other terms for predatory journals
include: bogus, pseudo-journals, fake, deceptive, sham, dubious, low credibility, and scholarly bad
faith journals in the literature (Berger, 2017). A predatory journal publishes articles that charge
publication fees without peer review, or by an unfair review process (Narimani & Dadkhah, 2017).
Predatory journals publish almost any research paper and charge high sums of money that is
legitimized as processing or publishing charge (Lakhotia, 2015). They have to charge high fees
since they need to profit from their business and to survive. Predatory journals usually use titles
and websites that resemble those of legitimate ones. They mainly use “international,” “scholarly
peer-reviewed,” or “scientific” titles and cover broad subject areas (Wehrmeijer, 2014). They also
copy texts verbatim and photographs from other well-established publishers. Fake publishers lack
ethics. They mainly send spam emails to scholars and request to join their editorial boards or
submit articles and often publish plagiarized manuscripts and other forms of fake research. The
majority of them does not conduct the peer review process and occasionally avoids the copy-
editing process (Wehrmeijer, 2014). Most fake journals have editors-in-chief who are honorary and
editorial board members whose names are added without their consent (Beall, 2013). Author
misconduct is also observed, such as plagiarism, which is evident in the articles published. Many
academicians are deceived by submitting their research articles to be published by these predatory
publishers that do not have an appropriate peer review process (Gunaydin & Dogan, 2015). In other
words, these journals accept articles that have weak scientific quality and charge considerable fees
to authors without offering necessary editorial and publishing services (Jalalian & Mahboobi, 2014).
Sometimes, researchers take advantage of predatory journals for their own benefit since they offer
easy publication. Many universities in Iran still base faculty promotions and evaluations on the
number of papers published, and they do not differentiate between predatory and high-quality
journals.

Iran has extensively increased its scientific production over the past years, which placed it
among the 31 countries that published “the top 1% most cited publications” (King, 2004;
Habibzadeh, 2008, p. 171). Such an increase in scientific publication in Iran is due to the increase
in the number of university professors and graduate students and the obligation for postgraduate
students and professors to publish in recognized and reputed journals in order to graduate, gain
career and academic promotion, and the allocation of greater budget to the research sector
(Habibzadeh, 2006). Since the pressure to publish scientific research has increased among
Iranian academics, research misconduct has come to the surface as well.

According to Jalalian and Mahboobi (2014), fake publishers have deceived thousands of PhD
and MA scholars and professors typically from developing countries such as Iran and those who
were in need of publishing their works. Because of institutional policies on publication, Iranian authors, especially professors and students, are under pressure and are deceived into publishing their research to these fake websites and into paying high charges. Increasing pressure is placed on Iranian researchers and students to publish numerous papers in highly ranked journals in order to gain a higher score, reputation, promotion, and pay rise. According to Habibzadeh (2008), the anxiety caused by publish or perish situation in Iran has led to unethical behaviors such as plagiarism (as cited in Babaii & Nejadghanbar, 2017). Because of such pressure, academics no longer have the time to write lengthy papers after years of research; instead, students and professors take the shortest possible means to reach multiple publications, which is plagiarizing and publishing in fake journals. Related to this practice of predatory publication is the concept of symbolic violence stated by Bourdieu and Passeron (1990). Bourdieu describes symbolic violence as “gentle, invisible violence which is unrecognized” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 24). According to Bourdieu, symbolic violence results in misrecognition, which is recognition as legitimate. Webb, Schirato, and Danaher (2002) consider misrecognition as a “form of forgetting”, that is, the dominated agents perceive the current situation as “natural” and readily complicit in the violence that is exercised upon them (p. 24). In this study, the supervisors are considered to act consistent with the university’s regulations (i.e., publication in journals). Because of such institutional pressures and regulations, the supervisors exert their symbolic violence on higher education students. In response, students resort to predatory publication as an appropriate way for receiving grades and defending their thesis for graduation. The researchers employed symbolic violence in this study as an analytic framework to realize how institutional relations of power affect the less powerful people in an academic context. The publication of low-quality papers in predatory journals in this context can be considered as “misrecognition” because it has led to a culture in which high-quality publication in reputable journals were given a minimal weight, and the importance of quantity over quality in publication is regarded as legitimate. Viewing this study from the framework of symbolic violence adds to our understanding of institutional power hierarchies and sociopolitical features of academic publication.

In CEAP, students’ needs and rights are taken into account. According to Benesch (2001), rights analysis is a tool for EAP students, professors, and authorities to find solutions to disapproving institutional, classroom, and social conditions. Benesch (1999a) stated that questions that might be raised in such analyses are: what rules manage this situation and who formulates them? How do the students respond to and resist such rules? And how can such areas be negotiated? Needs analysis addresses demands of the target situation, yet rights analysis challenges and transforms irrational and inequitable situations and is a framework for understanding and responding to power relations. Pressure to publish articles has overwhelmed higher education students each term. Because of such pressures placed on students, we decided to investigate the social factors affecting this phenomenon. Viewing this study from the perspective of (CEAP) and Bourdieu’s (1991) concept of symbolic violence enables us to understand the sociopolitical context by situating this practice within the wider relationships between supervisors, students, and institutional policies.

Globally, the university rewards systems influenced researchers’ publications practice. In Pakistan’s higher education, a system was implemented that allowed researchers to increase their earnings by publishing in low-quality journals (Atta-ur-Rahman & Nasim, 2004). Curry and Lillis (2004) mentioned that in non-English-speaking countries such as Hungary, Slovakia, and Spain, similar systems had impacts on publication policies. They mentioned that based on the university’s reward system in Hungary, publishing in high impact factor journals was the main criterion for giving grants and promotions. In Spain, the reward system needed five publications over 6 years for giving a promotion, two of which should be written in English. In addition, in Slovakia, researchers’ publication profiles are assessed by the annual review system, and a negative assessment would decrease 30% of an academic’s salary. Moher et al. (2017) examined 1907 biomedical papers in more than 200 predatory journals from Beall’s list. The study indicated
that the corresponding authors of the articles investigated came from countries comprising Japan (4%), Iran (5%), Nigeria (5%), US (15%), and India (27%).

Bahadori, Izadi, and Hoseinpourfard (2012) mentioned that in Iran the situation appears to be “publish or perish.” Habibzadeh (2008) noted that the pressure researchers and students are experiencing to publish articles forces them to undergo unethical behaviors like plagiarism. Regardless of the pressure to publish papers in Iran, universities have not made serious efforts to teach students to avoid unethical behaviors (Zamani, Azimi, & Soleimani, 2012). In a study by Abbasi and Akbari (2008) based on the theory of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991), social literacies perspective, and Bakhtin’s theory of language, claimed that some of the pedagogical practices that professors routinely engage in are involved in students’ transgressive intertextuality or textual plagiarism. That is, pedagogical practices place symbolic legitimate demands on students that cannot be met and place students as writers without authority that eventually lead to the production of low-quality patch-writing of papers. Khamesan and Amiri (2011) studied 400 students from four faculties; the findings showed that more than a half of the students mentioned that unethical behavior such as plagiarism is common in their university and the number of male students was significantly higher in comparison to female students with regard to unethical behavior. A study was carried out by Fealy, Biglari, and Pezeshkirad (2012) on 225 graduate students in a public university in Tehran to examine their attitudes toward plagiarism. The results showed that most students had neutral and unfavorable views with regard to plagiarism. In the survey, 40% of the students mentioned they do not resort to plagiarism, while the other 60% overtly said that they plagiarize to write their term papers. Moreover, there was a significant difference between the students who attended article-composition classes and those who did not, in considering plagiarism as unethical behavior. Hasrati (2013) conducted a qualitative study on the joint publication of research articles by supervisors and graduate students in an Iranian university in which he conducted 13 interviews with PhD students and supervisors. The results indicated that material and credentialing incentives for supervisors were considered as symbolic violence in the exertion of power. According to Shahghasemi and Akhavan (2015), in the years 1996 to 2007 through the publication of 8,797 medical papers, researchers in Iran were placed in the 39th position in the world and ranked 69 with regard to the $H$ index, that is, “an index that estimates the importance and impact of contributions by a scientist or a country” (p. 2). As cited by Shahghasemi and Akhavan, this low citation rate was due to plagiarism and feeble methodology (Farrokhi, 2009). Christopher and Young (2015) investigated the awareness of 142 medical science and veterinary researchers of predatory journals in a scientific writing workshop. They found that only 33 researchers were aware of predatory journals, and seven individuals indicated awareness of Beall’s list (Beall provides a list of predatory journals that he updates each year for scholars worldwide). Seethapathy, Kumar, and Hareesha (2016) examined the awareness of 480 Indian researchers of predatory journals. The results revealed that 57% of the researchers were unaware of such journals. The researchers mentioned that the pressure for publication particularly on junior researchers was the main reason for predatory publishing. Roberts (2016) revealed that the pressure to publish was mainly seen in developing countries. Erfanmanesh and Pourhossain (2017) investigated Iranian researchers’ contribution in open-access predatory journals in 2014. From Beall’s list of predatory journals, 21,817 articles published by 265 journals were examined in this study. The results of the research indicated that Iran was ranked as the second largest contributor after India since Iranian authors had contributed to 1,449 papers from 265 journals. Babaii and Nejadghanbar (2017) investigated 156 Iranian graduate students of applied linguistics about their views on plagiarism in academic writing. Both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that students’ unfamiliarity with the subject, low language proficiency and academic writing skills, lack of time, deceitfulness and laziness, teachers’ negligence and high expectations, and the educational system policies were the main reasons for committing unethical behavior.

The Iranian Association for Ethics in Science and Technology and its Journal of Ethics in Science and Technology are accountable for disseminating ethical issues in research (as cited in Babaii & Nejadghanbar, 2017). Authorities and institutions refer to a students' behavioral guiding manual
that forbids and warns against unethical behavior. The guiding manual mentions that academics who copy information and publish in predatory journals will be punished. The punishment depends on the kind and the level of severity of the unethical behavior that includes payment of fines, suspension from education and promotions, and court charges in severe cases (Iranian Students’ Behavioral Guiding Manual, n.d.).

According to Hasrati (2013), the rise in research output does not appear to be related to social and economic development and did to have much effect on the production of new technologies and patents since researchers are mainly interested in getting published. Regarding this issue, Mehrdad, Heydari, Sarbolouki, and Etemad (2004) stated that:

While probably two thirds of the research force in the industrial nations are engaged in developmental activities that lead to patents and new technologies, almost all of the researchers in developing countries are merely doing research for its own sake, thereby producing only scientific publications while rarely doing research with regard to innovative products or development of new technologies! (p. 83)

Considering the existing academic climate at Iranian universities, the researchers wanted to examine the problem of predatory publishing from the perspective of those who have less power and are required to write and publish term papers to graduate and receive grades, that is, students. Our study provides an emic perspective to this area since it examines students’ views on predatory publishing who are at the lowest level of power in the educational system in a country outside the Anglophone center.

2. Theoretical frameworks

2.1. Critical English for academic purposes (CEAP)

Pennycook (1997) mentioned that English for academic purposes (EAP) permits instructors to focus on discourse of pragmatism, that is, contextually sensitive concerns of students’ academic study. He also proposes critical pragmatism that addresses and critiques the concerns of the academic community through EAP studies so that the norms and values of the academic community become apparent to students. In harmony with Pennycook’s critical pragmatic EAP, CEAP in addition to negotiating, questioning, and executing equitable educational environments for academics, it also takes into account political, cultural, and social contexts (Benesch, 2001; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2001). According to Bahadori et al. (2012, p. 1):

Critical EAP, while retaining the aim of helping students navigate academic discourses and disciplines, challenges the notion of academic conventions as necessarily reasonable and non-negotiable. Instead, CEAP sees students as active agents, rather than novices or subordinates, who can be encouraged to question unreasonable requirements and collaborate with their instructors in developing appropriate curricula.

According to Pennycook (1994, 1997), Harwood and Hadley (2004, p. 357) critical pragmatic EAP “stresses that students have choices and should be free to adopt or subvert the dominant practices as they wish.” Benesch (2001) suggests that the primary goal of critical EAP is to increase students’ performance in their academic courses and encourage them to shape and question their education. She also describes critical pragmatic EAP as learners having voice and control in their academic learning environment by questioning practices of the present circumstances and looking for solutions to poor conditions. Poor education conditions can be altered through the process of rights analysis. According to Benesch, rights analysis in CEAP framework is investigating relations of power and increasing equality between students and professors and the educational community.

Power relates to who makes the decisions about the course content and assessment issues. Benesch (2001) points out that the goal of rights analysis is to draw students’ attention to issues of
power and that they have the right to raise questions about assignments and classes. In higher education, students are not apprentices who are required to publish articles to attain course grades but rather have the right to help decide about the course content and the kinds of assessment. Students consider that educational institutions and instructors are enforcing a value system (to increase the number of publications) that is excluding them from their rights. There is no doubt that becoming more aware of the ideological and political biases of academic publishing is a good thing. Using a CEAP lens, the present study provides a right analysis to investigate the sociopolitical factors that affect predatory publishing among higher education students.

2.2. Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence

Bourdieu (1991, p. 23) uses the term symbolic power as an invisible power that is recognized as legitimate and is used routinely in social life. He labeled symbolic violence when social conventions are ignored or regarded as natural, therefore vindicating the legitimacy of the present social structures. Once the holder of symbolic capital uses his power against an agent who has less power, and seeks to change the agent’s actions, he is thus exercising symbolic violence (Walther, 2014). The exertion of symbolic power is based on a shared belief, that is, the dominated group in their own subjection participates in the act. Individuals do not question their own role in the production of domination and subordination (Bourdieu, 1977). He/she considers symbolic violence as an act of misrecognition that is outside the control of consciousness and in the practical schemes of habitus. Symbolic meanings are exerted on agents in a way that they are considered as legitimate (Jenkins, 1992, p. 104). Such violence involves the gradual internalization and approval of ideas that leads to the subordination of a certain group of people (Connolly & Healy, 2004). Language as a form of domination can produce this violence and create discourses that construct social reality and influence power relations.

The concept of symbolic violence is useful to understand the domination, exploitation, and subordination that many higher education students experience at university each semester. For Bourdieu, the educational system is one of the main agents of symbolic violence and social agents having political and economic power know how to overcome the educational problems. In the present context, the dominant groups with a high amount of capital are the universities and professors that can be distinguished from the dominated group with a low amount of cultural and economic capital that are students. Because of the exertion of symbolic violence from institutions and supervisor on students with regard to article publications, students are in constant struggle to attain the demands required for achieving grades and university degrees. It seems that the final gift of higher education institutions in Iran is likely to be the symbolic gifts of grade and degree. In this study, symbolic violence is used as an analytic framework to recognize how power relations affect the conduct of predatory publishing in a higher education context. It should be mentioned that the researchers have used symbolic violence in this study as an analytical framework to understand how institutional and supervisors’ power relations affect the conduct of predatory publishing in the context of students as less powerful agents. Our intention is not to present a dark side of Iranian universities publication situation, but the main objective of this study is to explore the sociopolitical factors that affect the substantial increase in the number of publications in predatory journals among Iranian higher education students. More specifically, this study is going to address the following research questions:

1. Why is publishing in predatory journals increasing among higher education students and what sociopolitical factors affect this phenomenon?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female as well as PhD and MA students regarding predatory publishing?
   a. How can symbolic violence of predatory publishing be subverted in higher education?

3. Method

This study employed a mixed methods design to answer the proposed research questions. A Likert scale structured questionnaire was developed for PhD and MA students to look into issues
such as social behaviors, aims, and power relations, which oblige and convince them to submit their academic works to be published in low-quality journals. SPSS statistics 23 was used to analyze and interpret students' responses. The responses of the questionnaire were summarized through frequency counts and percentages and inferences were drawn. Moreover, the researchers drew on CEAP and the concept of symbolic violence to qualitatively interpret the results. The study surveyed 52 Iranian university PhD and MA students from four domestic national universities. We selected four universities with different educational levels and geographical areas through purposive sampling in order to recognize the difference in students' responses and to be able to generalize the results. The selected sample involved 26 female and 26 male students as well as 26 PhD and 26 MA students, 23 of which were selected through purposive sampling and 29 through random sampling. The ages of students ranged from 24 to 31 years, and students were from different fields including engineering, basic sciences, humanities, agriculture, and medical sciences. The reason for using different sampling methods was to obtain a representative sample and an amalgam of students with high research records including those who were selected as top university researchers and those who did not have a very good research background. The questionnaire was both emailed and handed out directly to students.

3.1. Instruments

The questionnaire for this study contained predetermined closed-ended questions and a rating scale with predeveloped response options to examine students' reasons for article publication and their criteria for choosing qualified journals for publication. The items were derived from review of literature. The questionnaire consisted of 63 items that comprised four sections. It was translated into Persian by the researchers in order to prevent any misunderstanding on the part of respondents. Sections A and B asked about students' purpose for publishing articles and their criteria in selecting a journal for publication. Section C obtained information regarding their general attitude toward research publication in their university, and section D solicited their reasons for choosing low-quality journals for publication. All sections supported an ordinal level of measurement in which a 5-point Likert scale was applied. The response options for sections A, C, and D were strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The response options for section B were very important, important, unsure, moderately important, and unimportant. The first part of section D elicits nominal data; the respondents were asked how frequently they submit papers to ordinary journals. If they answer sometimes or often, then they move on to the second part.

As shown in Table 1, the questionnaire addressed aspects pertaining to the research objectives. We used Likert-type scales since we were measuring latent constructs, that is, students' attitudes and opinions on the extent to which they agree or disagree on issues related to article publication and to permit respondents to express their feelings and attitudes on a continuum. The statements included in the scale express an opinion. The clusters of statements within the scale define four subscales that quantify more specific unidimensional sub-constructs within the scale.

3.2. Procedures to develop the questionnaire

Constructing a valid and reliable questionnaire is a must to reduce error of measurement. According to Berdie and Anderson (1974), “The validity of a questionnaire item is concerned with whether or not the item actually elicits the intended information” (p. 13). In this study, the researcher pretested the questionnaire before data collection to increase its validity. The questionnaire was evaluated for face validity and content validity. The researchers submitted the questionnaire to four experts in the field of TEFL. Factors related to item clarity, relevance of the items, and technical soundness were examined. The questionnaire was refined by including the suggestions of the experts. Additionally, the questionnaire was assessed by a statistician to determine if any irregularities existed that might hinder the data analysis process.
There is no single method to determine the sample size in the pilot test in quantitative research in the social science field; however, the final version of the questionnaire is usually pilot tested on a sample about 30–50 participants (Mooney & Duval, 1993; Perneger, Courvoisier, Hudelson, & Gayet-Ageron, 2015). In our pilot study, we used whatever was available by approximating that the experiment would be feasible in terms of time, money, and effort. Therefore, the questionnaire items were piloted with 41 students similar to the participants of the study to estimate its reliability. The Cronbach's Coefficient alpha was calculated to test the reliability of the questionnaire, with reference to its internal consistency. It measures the degree to which the performance of any item of the instrument is a right indicator of the performance in any other item in the same instrument (Price & Mueller, 1986). The results are presented in Table 2.

As can be seen in Table 2, the alpha value was .85, which demonstrated a high level of internal consistency among the questionnaire items.

4. Results and discussion
Data collected from the structured questionnaire was coded and analyzed quantitatively using SPSS statistics 23. The data (students’ responses) was assigned a code to increase data management and then entered into the computer software. The researchers calculated frequency and percentages using descriptive statistics to summarize students’ responses to each item.

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage of the response with regard to students’ purpose of article publication.

According to Table 3, almost all students of higher education approved that publication is a path to professional and academic development. Of the participants, 96.1% needed to publish articles in order to obtain the permission to defend their PhD or MA theses. Of the individuals, 59.7% admitted that they were forced to publish articles on the part of their professors that sometimes led them to plagiarize and write a wishy-washy paper to submit and receive the term grade. This is in line with what Babaii and Nejadghanbar (2017) stated, that Iranian students resort to plagiarism because they are inexperienced, weak, confused and uninformed, being committed inadvertently, and not done purposefully to deceive others (p. 248). University professors’ authorial powers in many universities impose their methods and how students will receive their grade if they publish articles every semester. Obeying the supervisor inculcates obedience and submissiveness to authority. The first authority figure in university for students to obey and learn is the instructor.
that establishes the expected behavior and interaction between them. A good instructor motivates students and helps them to overcome the difficulties and challenges they face during the composition and publication of articles rather than producing the state of a symbolically violent educational environment and acting as the authority who forces publication. If universities and more specifically supervisors institutionalize rather than educate, then the status of education can be considered as acts of symbolic violence that try to inculcate practices that reproduce a social demand in accordance with the symbolic violence. According to Benesch (2001), students desire an amicable pedagogical relationship and decrease of tensions for efficient learning.

The second part of the questionnaire deals with the level of importance of the characteristics that an academic journal should possess. As shown in Table 4, three of the most important characteristics that almost all participants agreed on were: having a high impact factor (86.6%), rapid publication and quick peer review (88.5%), and charging low fees for publication (80.7%). The number of indexes that the journals possess (77%) and having the label international (73.1%) mainly from European countries also persuaded students to resort to such journals. Predatory journals are very adept at author selections, web development, and appearing legitimate by imitating famous journal websites. They select titles for their journals that are similar to legitimate ones and put the names of respected scientists on their editorial boards list often without their consent (Beall, 2014). Editors of the predatory journals know that most researchers are in urgent need to publish ISI papers in journals indexed by Thomson Reuters; therefore, they falsely put these databases on their websites to attract inexperienced authors. These journals skip the peer review process completely or carry out a minimum peer-review (Drugas, 2015). Such journals

| Items                                                                 | Strongly agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|------------------|
| 1. It is good for my professional and academic development           | 23             | 29    | 0         | 0        | 0                |
|                                                                     | 44.2%          | 55.8% | 0         | 0        | 0                |
| 2. I am interested in research and enjoy scientific work             | 22             | 24    | 3         | 0        | 0                |
|                                                                     | 42.3%          | 46.2% | 5.8%      | 5.8%     | 0                |
| 3. I need to publish an article to defend my thesis                  | 36             | 14    | 2         | 0        | 0                |
|                                                                     | 69.2%          | 26.9% | 3.8%      | 0        | 0                |
| 4. Professors force me to publish articles which sometimes leads to  | 7              | 24    | 7         | 11       | 3                |
| plagiarizing material                                               | 13.5%          | 46.2% | 13.5%     | 21.2%    | 5.8%             |
| 5. I need to have a comprehensive resume                            | 25             | 23    | 4         | 0        | 0                |
|                                                                     | 48.1%          | 44.2% | 77%       | 0        | 0                |
| 6. I want to achieve scientific fame                                | 7              | 19    | 12        | 11       | 3                |
|                                                                     | 13.5%          | 36.5% | 23.1%     | 21.2%    | 5.8%             |
| 7. I want to earn money by selling articles or adding a person’s     | 2              | 8     | 5         | 19       | 18               |
| name who did not partake in the process of completing an article     | 3.8%           | 15.4% | 9.6%      | 36.5%    | 34.6%            |
| 8. I like to get familiar with the latest scientific theories       | 10             | 27    | 11        | 4        | 0                |
|                                                                     | 19.2%          | 51.9% | 21.2%     | 7.7%     | 0                |
| 9. I want to foster previous poor research papers                    | 9              | 16    | 16        | 11       | 0                |
|                                                                     | 17.3%          | 30.8% | 30.8%     | 21.2%    | 0                |
| 10. It is part of a course I am studying on                          | 14             | 25    | 5         | 5        | 3                |
|                                                                     | 26.9%          | 48.1% | 9.6%      | 9.6%     | 5.8%             |
| 11. I like others to learn from the findings of my work              | 12             | 32    | 5         | 3        | 0                |
|                                                                     | 23.1%          | 61.5% | 9.8%      | 5.8%     | 0                |
publish a great number of the manuscripts they receive, and the norm of the publishers is the acceptance of research papers, which is notified in a short time often within 48 h after the submission; therefore, weak manuscripts get to be published (Clark & Thompson, 2012). Predatory publishers usually have 100% high acceptance (Renandya, 2014). Bogus journals also claim that their journals have certain impact factors, which is calculated by fake impact agencies. Generally, such journals do not have high impact factors (IF), because it would be difficult for them to persuade researchers that a high impact factor journal invited them to publish their paper, with peer review process completed within just a few days (Jalalian & Mahboobi, 2014).

Education violence is a phenomenon determined by many factors including personal, educational, societal, and cultural factors. Students should have opportunities to learn about article publication, and they should be encouraged and supported educationally and financially to attend

Table 4. Section B: Characteristics of an academic journal

| Items                                                                 | Very important | Important | Unsure | Moderately important | Unimportant |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 1. Having a high impact factor                                      | 16             | 29        | 1      | 6                     | 0           |
|                                                                      | 30.8%          | 55.8%     | 1.9%   | 11.5%                 | 0           |
| 2. Having a lot of indexes such as Indian science indexing          | 16             | 24        | 4      | 4                     | 4           |
|                                                                      | 30.8%          | 46.2%     | 7.7%   | 7.7%                  | 7.7%        |
| 3. Rapid publication/quick peer review                              | 26             | 20        | 2      | 3                     | 1           |
|                                                                      | 50.0%          | 38.5%     | 3.8%   | 5.8%                  | 1.9%        |
| 4. The journal is international from USA or European country        | 14             | 24        | 8      | 3                     | 3           |
|                                                                      | 26.9%          | 46.2%     | 15.4%  | 5.8%                  | 5.8%        |
| 5. Charge low fees                                                  | 27             | 15        | 4      | 4                     | 2           |
|                                                                      | 51.9%          | 28.8%     | 7.7%   | 7.7%                  | 3.8%        |
| 6. The journal has sent an email invitation to you                  | 4              | 12        | 14     | 9                     | 13          |
|                                                                      | 7.7%           | 23.1%     | 26.9%  | 17.3%                 | 25.0%       |
| 7. Affiliation of the editors and there full address should be included | 6              | 21        | 8      | 10                    | 7           |
|                                                                      | 11.5%          | 40.4%     | 15.4%  | 19.2%                 | 13.5%       |
| 8. Having reputed editorial staff                                   | 11             | 24        | 2      | 11                    | 4           |
|                                                                      | 21.2%          | 46.2%     | 3.6%   | 21.2%                 | 7.7%        |
| 9. Exert fair judgment                                              | 27             | 17        | 4      | 3                     | 1           |
|                                                                      | 51.9%          | 32.7%     | 7.7%   | 5.8%                  | 1.9%        |
| 10. Have outstanding and renowned referees                          | 19             | 18        | 3      | 9                     | 3           |
|                                                                      | 36.5%          | 34.6%     | 5.8%   | 17.3%                 | 5.8%        |
| 11. High scientific quality of previously published articles        | 17             | 25        | 3      | 4                     | 2           |
|                                                                      | 34.6%          | 48.1%     | 5.8%   | 7.7%                  | 3.8%        |
| 12. There are many issues in one volume                             | 10             | 15        | 8      | 4                     | 15          |
|                                                                      | 19.2%          | 28.8%     | 15.4%  | 7.7%                  | 28.8%       |
| 13. There are many published articles in a single issue              | 6              | 17        | 10     | 2                     | 17          |
|                                                                      | 11.5%          | 32.7%     | 19.2%  | 3.8%                  | 32.7%       |
| 14. Referrals of reputed authors to that journal                    | 10             | 19        | 6      | 8                     | 9           |
|                                                                      | 19.2%          | 36.5%     | 11.5%  | 15.4%                 | 17.3%       |
| 15. The journal is appropriate for my subject matter                | 21             | 25        | 1      | 3                     | 2           |
|                                                                      | 40.4%          | 48.1%     | 1.9%   | 5.8%                  | 3.8%        |
national and international conferences and present high-quality papers. Based on Table 5, many universities do not allocate research facilities, equipment, and financial support to higher education students (34.6%). Faculties encourage and oblige professors to publish research for educational promotion without providing the required research time for the instructors. Consequently, this pressure tempts professors to make a beeline for increasing their publication and put this

### Table 5. Section C: Research publication culture

| Items                                                                 | Strongly agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|------------------|
| 1. Professors take the most part in the process of research production and publication as compared to students | 16             | 9     | 6         | 12       | 9                |
|                                                                       | 30.8%          | 17.3% | 11.5%     | 23.1%    | 17.5%            |
| 2. The faculty encourages professors to do and publish research        | 7              | 17    | 22        | 2        | 4                |
|                                                                       | 13.5%          | 32.7% | 42.3%     | 3.8%     | 7.7%             |
| 3. University holds annual conferences that encourages students to write articles | 3              | 19    | 5         | 15       | 10               |
|                                                                       | 5.8%           | 36.5% | 9.6%      | 28.8%    | 19.2%            |
| 4. Students have access to research books, journals and articles       | 7              | 25    | 6         | 12       | 2                |
|                                                                       | 13.5%          | 48.1% | 11.5%     | 23.1%    | 3.8%             |
| 5. Students have opportunities to learn about article publication       | 3              | 26    | 9         | 12       | 2                |
|                                                                       | 5.8%           | 50.0% | 17.3%     | 23.1%    | 3.8%             |
| 6. Professors talk about research and publication issue in the classroom | 8              | 25    | 5         | 12       | 2                |
|                                                                       | 15.4%          | 48.1% | 9.6%      | 23.1%    | 3.8%             |
| 7. Students are given support to attend conferences                     | 4              | 10    | 7         | 11       | 20               |
|                                                                       | 7.7%           | 19.2% | 13.5%     | 21.2%    | 38.5%            |
| 8. Time for doing research is built into students’ courses             | 4              | 14    | 8         | 16       | 10               |
|                                                                       | 7.7%           | 26.9% | 15.4%     | 30.8%    | 19.2%            |
| 9. Students are encouraged to read published articles                   | 9              | 22    | 10        | 8        | 3                |
|                                                                       | 17.3%          | 42.3% | 15.4%     | 19.2%    | 5.8%             |
| 10. Students are selected by the University to present papers at national and international conferences | 3              | 10    | 10        | 14       | 15               |
|                                                                       | 5.8%           | 19.2% | 19.2%     | 26.9%    | 28.8%            |
| 11. As part of the research course at University students are required to write articles | 8              | 27    | 5         | 11       | 1                |
|                                                                       | 15.4%          | 51.9% | 9.6%      | 21.2%    | 1.9%             |
| 12. Professors have a research time to work on articles with students apart from their teaching time | 7              | 12    | 13        | 15       | 5                |
|                                                                       | 13.5%          | 23.1% | 25%       | 28.8%    | 9.6%             |
| 13. Professors and students are paid for their research and publications | 7              | 10    | 8         | 10       | 17               |
|                                                                       | 13.5%          | 19.2% | 15.4%     | 19.2%    | 32.7%            |
| 14. University allocates research facilities, such as a separate office, typing and replicating equipment as well as financial support to PhD students | 4              | 14    | 2         | 8        | 24               |
|                                                                       | 7.7%           | 26.9% | 3.8%      | 15.4%    | 46.2%            |
| 15. University provides a competitive environment between the faculties and students in order to introduce the best faculty in research publication | 7              | 14    | 15        | 6        | 10               |
|                                                                       | 13.5%          | 26.9% | 28.8%     | 11.5%    | 19.2%            |
pressure on students, which in turn leads them to resort to predatory publishing. Instead of enforcing students to publish, the university should provide competitive environments between the faculties and students and reward them for high-quality research publications. This prompts students to cooperate and request a research time to work on articles with supervisors apart from their main courses. According to Benesch (2001), the authority of instructors should be recognized as an inter-relational act that has to be exercised and not possessed. She also states negotiation of authority should be an ongoing communication process in higher education to make the right decisions and solve disagreements when certain rights and interests are violated.

Table 6 revealed that, 51.9% of the students published in low-quality journals mainly because such journals published soon less than a month (34.7%), having facile peer review (38.5%), and charging low fees (30.8%). Majority of students enjoyed to be included in the list of reviewers and boost their resume (92.3%) or have high citations to achieve scientific fame and reputation (50%). Another institutional symbolic violence that contributes to exposing weaknesses, which lead to publishing weak papers in low-quality journals, is the lengthy peer review process domestic journals set for publication. Many domestic high-quality ISC journals take more than a year to inform authors about the acceptance of a paper. On the one hand, students want their papers to be reviewed and published quickly as possible in order to defend or to receive a term grade, and thus they are likely to submit their works to a journal that accepts their papers and saves their time. On the other hand, fake low-quality journals are aware of this and tailor their practices to offer what the authors want. They are very good at exploiting the innocence of graduate students and junior faculty (Beall, 2013). Beall states that it is apparent that mainly in the developing world there is pressure to publish, and that fake journals are only meeting the need that this pressure is producing. Many institutes and academic organizations give more credit to papers published in international journals, and this leads to excessive journals whose names begin with “International or Global . . .” (Beall, 2013).

4.1. Difference in the mean scores in relation to gender and education

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test as a test of normality was used to assess the normality of the distribution of data. As indicated in Table 7, a non-significant result (0.05 < 0.574) indicated normality. This suggests that a parametric test that assumes normality (i.e. T-test) can be safely used.

Based on the analysis obtained through descriptive statistics, further analysis for gender and education in relation to predatory publishing was done using the t-test. Independent sample T-test was conducted in order to determine whether there were significant differences between the answers of male/female and PhD/MA groups. T-test was used since our data was normally distributed. Table 8 shows the group statistics of the subjects according to their gender.

Table 8 shows that the difference in the mean scores of male participants was 2.8697 and for female participants was 2.8629. Following the slight difference, Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances was applied. Table 9 shows the details of test.

The P-value of T-test with equal variance was 0.945, which was greater than 0.05. This meant that there was no significance difference in mean score with respect to gender with regard to the questions answered.

The participants of the study were PhD and MA students from different disciplines. Table 10 shows the descriptive statistics in terms of education. The details indicate that there is a mean difference of 2.8648 and 2.8679 with a standard deviation of .32483 and .37870 between the scores of the questionnaire with regard to predatory publishing of PhD and MA students, respectively.

Following the descriptive analysis, a T-test analysis was carried out to determine whether there were any significant differences between the responses of PhD and MA students with regard to each item. Table 11 shows the details of the analysis.
| Question                                                                 | Strongly agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|------------------|
| 1. I am not interested in doing research and my professor obliges me to publish articles | 11             | 15    | 3         | 2        | 0                |
| 2. They publish my article very soon less than a month                    | 13             | 16    | 3         | 3        | 0                |
| 3. Because it will help me get a promotion                               | 7              | 15    | 3         | 2        | 0                |
| 4. They have facile peer review                                          | 7              | 17    | 2         | 1        | 0                |
| 5. It is easy to access                                                  | 4              | 12    | 6         | 5        | 0                |
| 6. To have a comprehensive resume                                        | 1              | 14    | 6         | 6        | 1                |
| 7. Because of their low fees                                              | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |
| 8. I want my work to be cited in various articles                        | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |
| 9. To be included in the list of the reviewers in the journal            | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |
| 10. I do not have time to spend on an article very much in order to submit it to a qualified journal | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |

Table 6: Section D: Publication in ordinary/low-quality journals

Sometimes/often

| N=27 | Strongly agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|------------------|
| 1    | 11             | 15    | 3         | 2        | 0                |
| 2    | 13             | 16    | 3         | 3        | 0                |
| 3    | 7              | 15    | 3         | 2        | 0                |
| 4    | 7              | 17    | 2         | 1        | 0                |
| 5    | 4              | 12    | 6         | 5        | 0                |
| 6    | 1              | 14    | 6         | 6        | 1                |
| 7    | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |
| 8    | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |
| 9    | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |
| 10   | 0              | 15    | 5         | 6        | 1                |

(Continued)

Table 6, Section D: Publication in ordinary/low-quality journals

Sometimes/often

| N=27 | Strongly agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|------------------|
| 27   | 27             | 27    | 27        | 27       | 27               |
| 51.9%| 48.1%          |       |           |          |                  |

(Continued)
Table 6. (Continued)

| B. Reasons for not publishing in ordinary journals                                                                 | N = 25 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. They don’t have valid international indexes                                                                      | 5      |
|                                                                                                                      | 15     |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1      |
| 2. The journal may be bogus                                                                                         | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 15     |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1      |
| 3. It has percipient review process/might not have a review process at all                                           | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 9      |
|                                                                                                                      | 6      |
|                                                                                                                      | 3      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
| 4. I don’t need to publish in such journals since I already have enough articles published in high quality journals | 5      |
|                                                                                                                      | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 3      |
|                                                                                                                      | 9      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1      |
| 5. The name of the journal is not among valid journals announced each year by the ministry of science and technology | 6      |
|                                                                                                                      | 13     |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
|                                                                                                                      | 4      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
| 6. The members of the editorial board are not well-known                                                            | 3      |
|                                                                                                                      | 8      |
|                                                                                                                      | 12     |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
| 7. The journal is included in the black list                                                                         | 12     |
|                                                                                                                      | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 5      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1      |
| 8. Because of their high fees                                                                                       | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 9      |
|                                                                                                                      | 3      |
|                                                                                                                      | 6      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
| 9. They have low academic value/not suitable for promotion                                                           | 9      |
|                                                                                                                      | 13     |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
| 10. I don’t want my paper to be open access or free for the public to download                                       | 3      |
|                                                                                                                      | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 7      |
|                                                                                                                      | 6      |
|                                                                                                                      | 2      |
| 11. The journal is not supported by professors and students                                                           | 10     |
|                                                                                                                      | 11     |
|                                                                                                                      | 3      |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1      |

|                                                                                                                      | 19.2%  |
|                                                                                                                      | 21.2%  |
|                                                                                                                      | 5.8%   |
|                                                                                                                      | 0      |
|                                                                                                                      | 1.9%   |
An analysis of the scores in relation to education shows that the significance value with equal variances assumed was .975, which was greater than 0.05. This suggests that there was no significant difference in the mean score with respect to education.

The policy push for publications in ISI journals in the context of globalization is due to the competition that is occurring in higher education (Lillis & Curry, 2013). In this context, many countries are trying to increase their global research production as a sign of academic quality. As

### Table 7. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

| N     | ff   |
|-------|------|
|       | 52   |

| Normal Parameters<sup>a,b</sup> | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Absolute                       | .108 |                |
| Positive                       | .108 |                |
| Negative                       | -.098|                |

| Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z           | .782 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)         | .574 |

<sup>a</sup>Test distribution is Normal.
<sup>b</sup>Calculated from data.

### Table 8. Group statistics

| Sex | N  | Mean    | Std. deviation | Std. error mean |
|-----|----|---------|----------------|-----------------|
| ff  | 26 | 2.8697  | .35248         | .06913          |
| Female | 26 | 2.8629  | .35308         | .06925          |

### Table 9. Independent Samples Test

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | t-test for equality of means |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| F           | Sig.  | t | df | Mean difference | Std. error difference | 95% confidence interval of the difference |
| ff Equal variances assumed             | .029 | .867 | .070 | 50 | .945 | .00682 | .09784 | -.18970 | .20335 |
| ff Equal variances not assumed         | .070 | 50.000 | .945 | .00682 | .09784 | -.18970 | .20335 |

### Table 10. Group statistics

| Education | N  | Mean    | Std. deviation | Std. error mean |
|-----------|----|---------|----------------|-----------------|
| PhD       | 26 | 2.8648  | .32483         | .06371          |
| MA        | 26 | 2.8679  | .37870         | .07427          |

An analysis of the scores in relation to education shows that the significance value with equal variances assumed was .975, which was greater than 0.05. This suggests that there was no significant difference in the mean score with respect to education.

The policy push for publications in ISI journals in the context of globalization is due to the competition that is occurring in higher education (Lillis & Curry, 2013). In this context, many countries are trying to increase their global research production as a sign of academic quality. As
Table 11. Independent Samples Test

| Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances | t-test for equality of means                  |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
|                                        | F    | Sig. | t    | df  | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. error difference | 95% confidence interval of the difference |
|                                        |      |      |      |     |                |                 |                      |                                      |
| ff                                     | .425 | .517 | -.032| 50  | .975            | -.00310         | .09785               | -.19964 to .19343                |
| Equal variances assumed                |      |      |      |     |                |                 |                      |                                      |
| Equal variances not assumed            | -.032| 48.867| .975 | -.00310 | .09785 |               |                      | -.19975 to .19354                |
a result, higher education and academic institutions in the world are rewarding departments and scholars for publications in journals with ISI indexes and other high impact factors (Feng, Beckett, & Huang, 2013; Lillis & Curry, 2013). Frey (2005) mentions that the number of publications determines the rankings of an academic institution and that they are examined against the number of their publications. Shumba (2010) also notes that the quality of a university is assessed by its research output. The effects of pressure to publish result in low quality of teaching, increased stress levels, and article that may lack innovation and relevance (Miller, Taylor, & Bedeian, 2011). According to Weiner (2001), there are more producers than consumers, that is, whereas the number of articles published has increased, the number of papers academics read each year has not changed.

In Bourdieu’s (1991) opinion, all symbolic systems exist in culture that shapes reality. He believes that institutions, including the university and its members, have the authority to build a representation of reality and to enforce it to students as a legitimate definition of reality. According to the symbolic violence model, norms and values are imposed by members that possess symbolic power, through university and instructor discourse. To combat symbolic violence, there is a need to identify the symbolic act and recognize it as illegitimate that can lead to reciprocation. If we consider professors act of obliging publication as a symbolic one, students may reciprocate through a negotiation of power and position. Many higher education students are contented and resort to predatory publishing, and they don’t see the need to dedicate completely to education. Bourdieu (1991) suggests that presenting the Education for values discipline at the focus of the curriculum in higher education and increasing values such as honesty, solidarity, dignity, tolerance, and educational institutions results in renewing equitable relations between various academic social categories. Fortunately, in recent years, educational reform measures and policies have aimed to minimize symbolic violence and increase the democracy of education by enacting punitive regulations for undergraduate students and professors in case of predatory publishing. Many faculties do not accept such articles any more neither from students nor from professors. University professors should not force students to publish papers for their own advantage and instead encourage and collaborate with students in the process of article composition and publication rather than having a power and authority relationship. Rezanejad and Rezaei (2013) noted that the main sources in informing students about unethical behaviors are Iranian university professors and that Iranian universities offer inadequate education on unethical behaviors. The ministry of science, research and technology has provided a black list of invalid journals and has warned academicians of grant reduction in case of publishing in predatory journals. Moreover, no longer there should be regulations on possessing published articles for promotion, employment, or admission to the doctorate program.

According to Benesch (2001), every curriculum and syllabus expresses an ideology or a belief system. Hence, this ideology should be made noticeable to students, so that the awareness of ideology becomes a main objective of the learning process. Benesch believes that, students have the right to critique the systems and ideologies of learning to which they are exposed. She emphasizes the importance of needs analysis in EAP; moreover, she believes that needs analysis should be accompanied with an analysis of students’ rights. Definitely, such an analysis would explain the unfavorable institutional, social, and classroom conditions that students may encounter (Benesch, 2001). This broader definition of needs analysis is not observable in Iran’s higher education. Publication in domestic journals has moved toward a more recommendation condition. Papers of reputed authors or those who they recommend are in priority for publication in high-quality domestic journals, whereas others take years to get acceptance of their papers, which in turn inevitably resort to predatory journals. All students and professors have the right to voluntarily write and publish papers in domestic journals with an acceptable peer review process. According to Benesch, needs and rights analysis, which is the main paradigm for the articulation of student perception and rights, unfortunately has been widely overlooked in the Iranian university context.

5. Conclusion, implication, and suggestions for further research

This study was designed to look at higher education students’ attitudes and thoughts toward predatory publishing in universities. The aim of the study was to consider the social factors with regard to what
students thought about predatory publishing in universities. We conducted research through a structured questionnaire with 52 students in four national universities. The research reported was written in light of the literature review on symbolic violence and CEAP in educational institutions. Students from various disciplines shared beliefs with regard to predatory publishing and the pressure they have experienced in classrooms for publishing research papers. This research made significant contributions to the academic communities and will have direct implications for academicians and researchers. CEAP widens the lens of academic purposes to take the sociopolitical context of academic communities into account, that is, the social behaviors, aims, power relations, and political interests of such communities. This study is significant in that it raises a very important issue for researchers and students who are under pressure to publish articles. Moreover, it challenges dominant norms and that instructors should reconstruct in how they see themselves as supervisors, open up spaces for cooperation between professors and students, and constantly contemplate on their practices in universities and classrooms and how it influences students’ behavior. This study might be beneficial for university supervisors to share some control and to have pupils feel free and more engaged in the process of composition and publication of research papers that is in line with what the literature stated about restraining of student voice. Changing the universities and professors’ attitudes and opinions toward critical pedagogy, especially toward issues of authority and freedom, would be important in the creation of critical spaces in universities. Academicians and institutions’ perspective with regard to the importance of publishing academic articles needs to be changed. If the main criteria for promotion and employment remain the number of academic papers published, students will continue publishing as many articles as they can in bogus journals. Constructing critical spaces in higher education is essential by bringing up discussions that questions evaluation of scholarship as well as conducting right analysis for the articulation of students’ perspective. The results of this study put forward suggestions for Iranian university instructors to educate students to move away from reliance on predatory publishing. Through dialogue, consideration, and action, educational systems can alter and become more scholar-centered system. University professors should reconsider some of their practices to enhance their students’ academic writing skills by assigning manageable writing assignments. It is through engaging with the assignments that students should be taught to make a distinction between predatory and reputable high-quality journals and should be informed that research that they tend to publish in some questionable journals can endanger their academic reputation. Institutions and faculty members should teach and encourage appropriate and ethical publishing among higher education students before they become victims of predatory journals. Research is essentially ethics based that necessitates standard publishing. To have this ethics-based science, all science stakeholders are accountable to teach and inform others about predatory publishers and disseminate appropriate research culture. Higher education students should bear in mind the publishing ethics statements, peer-review policy, the journal’s scope, indexing databases, and quality of the papers published to identify questionable journals. Moreover, they should be more acquainted with the literacy skills of scholarly publishing and to be informed with new predatory journals and blacklists to avoid fake publishing. This study was limited to four national universities in Iran; other national institutions should also be investigated and compared to see how they influence students to publish papers. In addition, further research is required to investigate how developed countries look at research publication in academic institutions and how their academic institutions raise the quality of research output of students and professors.

Funding
The authors received no direct funding for this research.

Author details
Saman Ebadi
E-mail: samanebadi@gmail.com
ORCID ID: http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8623-7751
Gerannaz Zamani
E-mail: gerannazamani@gmail.com

1 Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.
2 TEL, Faculty of Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.

References
Abbasi, A. R., & Akbari, N. (2008). Are we encouraging patchwriting? Reconsidering the role of the pedagogical context in ESL student writers’ transgressive intertextuality. English for Specific Purposes, 27, 267–284. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2008.02.001
Atta-ur-Rahman, & Nazim, A. (2004). Time for enlightened moderation: A call for Islamic nations to renew and reaffirm their commitment to science. Nature, 432, 273–274. doi:10.1038/432273a

Bobai, E., & Nejadghahbar, H. (2013). Plagiarism among Iranian graduate students of language studies: Perspectives and causes. Ethics & Behavior, 27(3), 240–258. doi:10.1080/1050860X.2016.1138864

Bahadori, M., Izadi, M., & Hoseinpourfar, M. (2012). Plagiarism: Concepts, factors and solutions. Iranian Journal of Military Medicine, 14(3), 168–177.

Beall, J. (2013). The open-access movement is not really about open access. Triple C, 11(2), 589–597. doi:10.3126/triplec.v11i2.s525

Beall, J. (2014). Unintended consequences: The rise of predatory publishers and the future of scholarly publishing. Editorial Office News, (2014/2), 4–6.

Benesch, S. (1999a). Rights analysis: Studying power relations in an academic setting. English for Specific Purposes, 18, 313–327. doi:10.1016/S0889-4906(98)00011-8

Benesch, S. (2001). Critical English for academic purposes: Theory, politics and practice. London and New York: Routledge.

Berdie, D. R., & Anderson, J. F. (1974). Questionnaire design and use. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press.

Berger, M. (2017). Everything you ever wanted to know about predatory publishing but were afraid to ask. In ACRL 2017, Baltimore, Maryland, March 22–25, 2017. [Conference paper]

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Outline of a theory of practice. R. Nice, Trans. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). Language and symbolic power. G. Raymond & M. Adamson, Trans. Cambridge, England: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1990). Reproduction in education, society and culture. R. Nice, Trans. London, England: Sage.

Butler, D. (2013). Investigating journals: The dark side of publishing. Nature, 495(7442), 433–435. doi:10.1038/495433a

Christopher, M. M., & Young, K. M. (2015). Awareness of “predatory” open-access journals among prospective veterinary and medical authors attending scientific writing workshops. Frontiers in Veterinary Science, 2, 22. doi:10.3389/fvets.2015.00022

Clark, A. M., & Thompson, D. R. (2012). Making good choices about publishing in the journal jungle [editorial]. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 68(11), 2373–2375. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2012.06081.x

Connolly, P., & Healy, J. (2004). Symbolic violence, locality and social class: The educational and career aspirations of 10–11 year olds boys in Belfast. Pedagogy Culture and Society, 12, 15–33. doi:10.1080/14782040400200287

Curry, M. J., & Lillis, T. (2004). Multilingual scholars and the imperative to publish in English: Negotiating interests, demands and rewards. TESOL Quarterly, 38, 663–688. doi:10.2307/3588284

Drugas, M. (2015). Predatory publishing and the psychology behind it. Psychological Thought, 8(1), 1–6. doi:10.1093/pst/v8i1.136

Erfanmonesh, M. A., & Pourhossain, R. (2017). Publishing in predatory open access journals: A case of Iran. article in publishing. Research Quarterly.

Farrokh, F. (2009). Plagiarism: Where unawareness makes a lame excuse. Arch Iranian Med, 12(2), 176–178.

Fealy, S., Biglari, N., & Pezeshkirad, G. (2012). Negares va raftare daneshjooyane daneshkhade keshvarzvie Tarbiat Modarres dar zameen serghate elmi [Attitudes and behaviors of students in Faculty of Agriculture, TarbiatModarres University towards plagiarism].

Fasnameh Pazhoohesh Va Barname Razi Dar Amoaehee Ali, 65, 133–151.

Feng, H., Beckett, G., & Huang, D. (2013). From ‘import’ to ‘import—Export’ oriented internationalization: The impact of national policy on scholarly publication in China. Language Policy, 12(3), 251–272. doi:10.1007/s10993-013-9285-8

Frey, B. S. (2005). Problems with publishing: Existing state and solutions. European Journal of Law and Economics, 19, 173–190. doi:10.1007/10657-005-5426-7

Gunaydin, G. P., & Dogan, N. O. (2015). A growing threat for academicians: Fake and predatory journals. The Journal of Academic Emergency Medicine, 14, 9–96.

Habibzadeh, F. (2006). A bird’s eye view of science publishing and editing in Iran. European Sciences Editing, 32, 98–100.

Habibzadeh, F. (2008). On stealing words and ideas. Hepatitis Monthly, 8(3), 171–172.

Harwood, N., & Hadley, G. (2004). Demystifying institutional practices: Critical pragmatism and the teaching of academic writing. English for Specific Purposes, 23, 355–377.

Hasrati, M. (2013). Material and credentialing incentives as symbolic violence: Local engagement and global participation through joint publication. Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 27, 154–179. doi:10.1177/1050842212468886

Iranian Students’ Behavioral Guiding Manual. n.d. Retrieved from http://student.kashanu.ac.ir. April 20, 2015.

Jalalzadeh, M., & Mohaboobi, H. (2014). Hijacked journals and predatory publishers: Is there a need to re-think how to assess the quality of academic research? Sciences Technical, 11, 389–394.

Jenkins, R. (1992). Pierre Bourdieu. London, New York: Routledge.

Khamsean, A., & Amiri, M. A. (2011). Barresie taghalobe tahsilii dar mian daneshjooyane dokhtar va pesar [Studying educational plagiarism among male and female students]. Fasnameyeh Akhlagh Dar Oloom Va Fanvar, 6(1), 53–61.

King, D. A. (2004). The scientific impact of nations. Nature, 430, 311–316. doi:10.1038/430311a

Lokhatia, S. C. (2015). Predatory journals and academic pollution. Current Science, 108(8), 1407–1408.

Lillis, T. M., & Curry, M. J. (2013). English, scientific publishing and participation in the global knowledge economy. In E. Erling & P. Sargeant (Eds.), English and international development (pp. 220–242). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Mehrhad, M., Heydari, A., Sarbouloki, M. N., & Etemad, S. (2004). Basic science in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Scientometrics, 61, 79–88. doi:10.1023/B:SCIE.0000037364.65282.4d

Miller, A. N., Taylor, S. G., & Bedeian, A. G. (2011). Publish or perish: Academic life as management faculty live it. Career Development International, 16(S), 422–445. doi:10.1108/136031011111167751

Moher, D., Shamseer, L., Cobey, K. D., Lalu, M. M., Galipeau, J., Avey, M. T., . . . Daniel, R. (2017). Stop this waste of people, animals and money. Nature, 549(7670), 23. doi:10.1038/549023a

Mooney, C. Z., & Duval, R. D. (1993). Bootstrapping: A nonparametric approach to statistical inference. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Namimani, M., & Dadkhah, M. (2017). Predatory journals and perished articles: A letter to editor. Emerig (Tehran), 5(11).

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (Eds.). (2004). Critical pedagogies and language learning. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Pennycook, A. (1994). *The cultural politics of English as an international language*. London, England: Longman.

Pennycook, A. (1997). Vulgar pragmatism, critical pragmatism, and EAP. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(4), 253–269. doi:10.1016/S0889-4506(97)00019-7

Pennycook, A. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction*. London, England: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Perneger, T. V., Courvoisier, D. S., Hudelson, P. M., & Gayet-Ageron, A. (2015). *Qual Life Res*, 24, 147–151. doi:10.1007/s11136-014-0752-2

Price, J. L., & Mueller, C. W. (1986). *Handbook of organizational measurement*. Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing.

Renandya, W. A. (2014). What are Bogus journals and why should we avoid them. *Beyond Words*, 2, 2.

Rezanejad, A., & Rezaei, S. (2013). Academic dishonesty at universities: The case of plagiarism among Iranian language students. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 11, 275–295. doi:10.1007/s10805-013-9193-8

Roberts, J. (2016). Predatory journals: Illegitimate publishing and its threat to all readers and authors. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 13(12), 1830–1833. doi:10.1016/j.jsxm.2016.10.008

Seethapathy, G. S., Kumar, J. U., & Hareesha, A. S. (2016). India’s scientific publication in predatory journals: Need for regulating quality of Indian science and education. *Current Science*, 111(11), 1759–1764. doi:10.18520/cs/v111/i11/1759-1764

Shahghasemi, E., & Akhavan, M. (2015). Confessions of academic ghost authors: The Iranian experience. *Sage Open*, 5(1), 1–7. doi:10.1177/2158244015572262

Shumba, A. (2010). Accredited research output by academic staff according to DoHET benchmarks. Paper presented at a Research Orientation Seminar, School of Teacher Education, Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, South Africa. March 18, 2010.

Walther, M. (2014). *Repatriation to France and Germany: A comparative study based on Bourdieu’s theory of practice*. Springer Gabler Verlag publisher.

Webb, J., Schirato, T., & Danaher, G. (2002). *Understanding Bourdieu*. London, England: Sage.

Wehrmeijer, M. (2014). Exposing the predators. Methods to stop predatory journals. Master Thesis. Leiden, The Netherlands: Leiden University. Available at: https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/28943.

Weiner, G. (2001). The academic journal: Has it a future? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 9, 9. doi:10.14507/epaa.v9n9.2001

Zamani, B. E., Azimi, A. S., & Soleimani, N. (2012). Differences in students’ viewpoints about effective factors on plagiarism according to their gender and academic disciplines. *Ethics in Science & Technology*, 7(3), 1–12.
Appendix
“Students Conceptions of Research Publication”

What does “research publication” mean to you and what role does it play in your academic and professional life? These are important questions with regard to this issue—especially at a time when in many countries students are being encouraged to do research and publish their work as a form of academic and professional development. This Survey asks you for your views on these issues and will take 15–20 min to complete. Participation in this study is voluntary. Thank you for your interest in contributing.

Section A: The purpose of article publication

The purpose of this section is to elicit your reasons for writing an article for publication. Read each description below and choose whether you agree or disagree on the reasons for paper publication.

| Items                                                                 | Strongly agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|------------------|
| 1. It is good for my professional and academic development           |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 2. I am interested in research and enjoy scientific work             |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 3. I need to publish an article to defend my thesis                  |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 4. Professors force me to publish articles which sometimes leads to plagiarizing material |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 5. I need to have a comprehensive resume                             |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 6. I want to achieve scientific fame                                 |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 7. I want to earn money by selling articles or adding a person’s name who did not partake in the process of completing an article |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 8. I like to get familiar with the latest scientific theories        |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 9. I want to foster previous poor research papers                    |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 10. It is part of a course I am studying on                          |                |       |           |          |                  |
| 11. I like others to learn from the findings of my work              |                |       |           |          |                  |

Section B: Characteristics of an academic journal

1. Here is a list of characteristics that a journal may have. Tick ONE box for each to give your opinion about how important it is each criterion in selecting a journal.
### Section C: Research publication culture

Tick ONE box for each statement below to give your opinion about the general attitude to research publication in your university.

| Items                                                                 | Unimportant | Moderately important | Unsure | Important | Very Important |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. Having a high impact factor                                       |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 2. Having a lot of indexes such as Indian science indexing            |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 3. Rapid publication/quick peer review                                 |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 4. The journal is international/from USA or European country         |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 5. Charge low fees                                                     |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 6. The journal has sent an email invitation to you                    |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 7. Affiliation of the editors and their full address should be included|             |                      |        |           |                |
| 8. Having reputed editorial staff                                     |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 9. Exert fair judgment                                                 |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 10. Have outstanding and renowned referees                            |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 11. High scientific quality of previously published articles          |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 12. There are many issues in one volume                                |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 13. There are many published articles in a single issue                |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 14. Referrals of reputed authors to that journal                      |             |                      |        |           |                |
| 15. The journal is appropriate for my subject matter                  |             |                      |        |           |                |

(Continued)
Section D: Publication in ordinary/low-quality journals

1. How frequently do you submit papers to ordinary (not ISI or Scopus) journals? (Tick ONE)

| Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often |
|-------|--------|-----------|-------|

*If you chose sometimes or often answer the following section

2. You said you publish papers often or sometimes in ordinary journals. Below are a number of possible reasons for doing so. Tick those that are true for you.

| Items                                                                 | Disagree strongly | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------------|
| 1. I am not interested in doing research and my professor obliges me to publish articles |                   |          |            |       |                |
| 2. They publish my article very soon less than a month                 |                   |          |            |       |                |
| 3. Because it will help me get a promotion                            |                   |          |            |       |                |
| 4. They have facile peer review                                       |                   |          |            |       |                |
| 5. It is easy to access                                               |                   |          |            |       |                |
| 6. To have a comprehensive resume                                     |                   |          |            |       |                |
| 7. Because of their low fees                                          |                   |          |            |       |                |
3. You said you publish papers never or rarely in ordinary/low quality journals. Below are a number of possible reasons for doing so. Tick those that are true for you.

| Items                                                                 | Disagree strongly | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|-------|---------------|
| 1. They don’t have valid international indexes                         |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 2. The journal may be bogus                                            |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 3. It has percipient review process/might not have a review process at all |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 4. I don’t need to publish in such journals since I already have enough articles published in high quality journals |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 5. The name of the journal is not among valid journals announced each year by the ministry of science and technology |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 6. The members of the editorial board are not well-known              |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 7. The journal is included in the black list                          |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 8. Because of their high fees                                         |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 9. They have low academic value/not suitable for promotion            |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 10. I don’t want my paper to be open access or free for the public to download |                   |          |            |       |               |
| 11. The journal is not supported by professors and students           |                   |          |            |       |               |

(Continued)
