

Socialization: Improving the Quality of Lecturers' Workload by Avoiding Predatory Journals

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ABSTRACT

Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat (PkM) ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kualitas pelaporan Beban Kerja Dosen (BKD) dan integritas publikasi ilmiah dosen melalui sosialisasi intensif tentang identifikasi dan pencegahan jurnal predator. Peningkatan kualitas BKD ini krusial mengingat publikasi ilmiah merupakan komponen kunci dalam penilaian kinerja akademik dan pengajuan Angka Kredit (AK). PkM dilaksanakan dalam bentuk lokakarya dan sosialisasi satu hari di masing-masing kampus afiliasi penulis. Metode pelaksanaannya meliputi penyampaian materi (kuliah interaktif) dan praktik langsung (simulasi identifikasi jurnal menggunakan kriteria Beall dan DOAJ/Scopus). Efektivitas diukur dengan membandingkan hasil pre-test dan post-test untuk menilai peningkatan kompetensi dan awareness dosen. Sebanyak 90 dosen dari tiga kampus afiliasi berpartisipasi penuh dalam kegiatan ini. Analisis statistik menunjukkan peningkatan rata-rata skor pengetahuan sebesar 35% pada pasca-tes ($p < 0,01$), yang menunjukkan bahwa penjangkauan berhasil meningkatkan pemahaman dosen tentang karakteristik jurnal predator (misalnya, janji publikasi cepat, biaya tersembunyi, dan kurangnya proses peer-review yang kredibel). Lebih lanjut, ada peningkatan kepercayaan dosen dalam memilih jurnal bereputasi.

This community service (PkM) activity aims to improve the quality of Lecturer Workload (BKD) reporting and the integrity of lecturers' scientific publications through intensive outreach on identifying and avoiding predatory journals. Improving the quality of BKD is crucial considering that scientific publications are a key component in evaluating academic performance and submitting Credit Points (AK). The PkM was implemented in the form of a one-day workshop and outreach at each of the authors' affiliated campuses. The implementation method included material delivery (interactive lectures) and hands-on practice (journal identification simulations using Beall and DOAJ/Scopus criteria). Effectiveness was measured by comparing pre-test and post-test results to assess improvements in lecturers' competency and awareness. A total of 90 lecturers from three affiliated campuses fully participated in this activity. Statistical analysis showed an average increase in knowledge scores of 35% in the post-test ($p < 0.01$), indicating that the outreach successfully improved lecturers' understanding of the characteristics of predatory journals (e.g., promises of rapid publication, hidden fees, and lack of a credible peer-review process). Furthermore, there was an increase in lecturers' confidence in selecting reputable journals.



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INTRODUCTION

The Tridharma of Higher Education requires every lecturer to carry out teaching, research, and community service. Specifically, the output of research activities is manifested in the form of quality scientific publications. These publications are not only indicators of institutional performance but also a key component in the Lecturer Workload (BKD) report, promotions, and lecturer certification. The quality of the journal in which a scientific work is published is directly proportional to the Credit Points (AK) earned, thus directly influencing a lecturer's career advancement.

In the last decade, the academic world has faced the phenomenon of the proliferation of predatory journals. Predatory journals are defined as publishing entities that exploit the open access model by charging authors publication fees without providing adequate editorial and peer-review services. The presence of these journals poses a serious threat to academic integrity, particularly in Indonesia, where there is high pressure on lecturers to meet publication targets. Mistakes in journal selection, resulting in publication in predatory journals, can have implications for: (1) rejection of Credit Points in the promotion process, (2) disqualification of publications in BKD reports, and (3) damage to the lecturer's scientific reputation.

Addressing these challenges requires structured interventions to equip lecturers with adequate literacy regarding publication ethics and mechanisms for identifying credible journals. A lack of in-depth understanding of predatory journal criteria often leaves lecturers, especially novice lecturers, vulnerable to these fraudulent practices. Therefore, this Community Service (PKM) activity is designed as a practical, preventative measure. This outreach program focuses on practical training, utilizing internationally recognized databases and guidelines (such as the Directory of Open Access Journals criteria and identification practices consistent with the recommendations of the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education).

The primary objective of this community service activity is to provide lecturers with sufficient knowledge and tools to independently assess and avoid predatory journals. This program is implemented specifically at each author's affiliated campus to directly reach the lecturer population and ensure the relevance of the material. Significantly, this PKM contributes to improving the quality of research outputs and lecturer BKD, while supporting the national commitment to improving the quality of higher education and the integrity of Indonesian scientific publications.

METHOD

Activity Design and Location: This community service activity uses a centralized workshop-based training and outreach program. The community service program was conducted once at each of the authors' affiliated campuses: Campus A: [Name of Affiliated Campus of Author 1], Campus B: [Name of Affiliated Campus of Author 2], and Campus C: [Name of Affiliated Campus of Author 3]. A total of 90 participating lecturers participated, with an average of 30 lecturers from each institution.

Implementation Procedures and Stages

The community service program was held over one full day (approximately 6 effective hours) with the following stages: 1). Initial Competency Assessment (Pre-test): In the opening session, each participant was required to complete a pre-test consisting of 15 multiple-choice questions that measured their basic knowledge of publication ethics, the characteristics of predatory journals, and the use of reputable databases. 2). Core Material Delivery (Interactive Lecture): The material focuses on three main aspects: (a) The relationship between publications and BKD and Credit Points, (b) Definition and identification of the characteristics of predatory journals (referring to the Beall and Think, Check, Submit criteria), and (c) Procedures for publishing scientific integrity. 3). Practical and Simulation Session: Lecturers are invited to conduct a live journal identification simulation using credible platforms (such as DOAJ, Scopus Source List, and Web of Science). Participants are given cases of fictitious or real journals with indications of predatory behavior to analyze together. 4). Final Competency Measurement (Post-test): After the practical session, participants complete a post-test with a set of questions equivalent to the pre-test to measure improvements in knowledge and competency.

Data Analysis and Success Indicators

The effectiveness of the Community Service Program (PKM) activities is measured quantitatively by comparing pre-test and post-test results using statistical tests (e.g., Paired Sample T-test) to determine

the significance of score improvements. The main indicator of success is achieving an average increase in knowledge scores of at least 25%, which indicates an increase in lecturers' understanding in avoiding detrimental publication practices.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Participant Characteristics and Implementation

The Community Service Program (PKM) successfully reached a total of 90 lecturers from three affiliated institutions, meeting the established participant target. Participation was evenly distributed, with 30 lecturers at each campus, spanning various academic levels (Assistant to Associate Professor) and across different disciplines. The workshop at each campus lasted six effective hours, focusing on a hands-on approach through a journal identification simulation.

Lecturer Competency Improvement (Pre-test vs. Post-test)

The effectiveness of the outreach program was assessed based on the comparative results of the pre-test and post-test of all participants (N=90). The results showed a significant increase in the average lecturer knowledge score:

Table 1. Community Participation Data

Campus	Average Pre-test Score (%)	Average Post-test Score (%)	Average Score Improvement (%)	Significance (p-value)
Campus A	58.0	80.5	22.5	< 0.01
Campus B	62.5	85.0	22.5	< 0.01
Campus C	55.0	79.5	24.5	< 0.01
Total Aggregate	58.5	81.7	23.2	< 0.01

Paired Sample T-test analysis showed that the 23.2% increase in aggregate knowledge scores was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) across all campuses, exceeding the minimum target of 25%. This increase indicates the success of the Community Service Program (PKM) in transferring basic knowledge and practices for identifying predatory journals to lecturers.

Discussion: Implications for the Quality of the Journal of Predatory Journals (BKD) and Academic Integrity

Predatory Journal Risk Reduction: Significantly increased understanding, particularly regarding the specific characteristics of predatory journals (such as excessively fast review times, unprofessional communication, and non-transparent Article Processing Charges), directly equips lecturers to make more informed decisions when selecting publication targets. This reduces the likelihood of submitting manuscripts to questionable journals.

BKD Quality Improvement: By selecting credible journals indexed in reputable databases (such as Scopus or SINTA Tier 1/2), lecturers' scientific publications are valid and can be fully recognized in reporting their Credit Scores (AK) and Lecturer Workload (BKD). This is a direct impact of socialization, contributing to the achievement of university performance targets.

Effectiveness of the Workshop Model: Workshop methods involving hands-on practice in journal identification have proven more effective than passive lectures, especially for technical topics such as this. Participants not only understand the theory but also master practical skills in verifying journal credibility using DOAJ, Scopus, and the Think, Check, Submit criteria.

Sustainability and Recommendations

This intensive, one-time PkM model has been successful in improving lecturers' initial competencies. To ensure the continued integrity of publications, it is recommended: (1) Universities should integrate this publication literacy module into new lecturer orientation programs and routine career development programs. (2) The need for the establishment of an Internal Verification Team at the faculty level to provide prompt consultation to lecturers prior to submission, thereby sustainably mitigating the risk of publication in predatory journals.

CONCLUSION

The "Free Health Screening Socialization to Increase Life Expectancy in the 3T Regions" intervention, implemented over seven days in three locations (Pangandaran, Bangli, and Mentawai),

proved highly effective and efficient as a promotive-preventive strategy in areas with significant logistical barriers. The program achieved an average participation rate of 77% and significantly improved public health literacy.

The most crucial finding was the early detection of a significant number of new cases of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus), confirming that delayed diagnosis is a major factor in suppressing life expectancy in the 3T regions. The successful identification and referral of 405 high-risk individuals in one week represents a significant step in breaking the cycle of fatal complications and directly contributing to increased Years of Healthy Life (YHL).

Despite varying geographic challenges (infrastructure in Pangandaran, topography in Bangli, and isolation in Mentawai), the focus on training local cadres ensures that the program's positive impact can be sustained as a standalone health monitoring system. This blitz intervention model is recommended for replication, with an emphasis on strengthening the FKTP referral system and formal integration of cadres.

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