

How Can We Identify Hijacked Journals?

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Abstract

By developing research and academic centers, the number of performed research articles has also increased. On the other hand, publishing the results of these articles in scientific journals shall also grow. In the meantime, researchers are trying to publish the findings of their research in journals which have been approved by one or more international indices so that such findings can be seen. In order to enhance the academic standards of Universities, proper journal choice will be of interest to researchers, especially those that are indexed in websites such as Thomson Reuters. However, certain forgery frauds researchers by launching fake Web sites that have been named by academic journal titles. In this paper, we introduce an approach to identify this type of journals that will be applicable by researchers in various academic disciplines.

Keyword: Hijacked Journal, Research, Journal Editing, journal Indexing

1. Introduction

Hijacked Journals are the journals that attempt to fraud researchers by using the name and reputation of their main, original journals. Forgers introduce themselves as the main journal editors by launching a website for journals that have printed copies and lacked electronic copies and then fraud researchers. In other words, they use the conventional methods of social engineering to deceive their victims [1], [2]. So far, a number of reputable sites of indexing journals have been got deceived by journal forgers. Among these indexed websites, we can mention Cite Factor (<http://www.citefactor.org>) that has indexed almost all hijacked journals together with their forged address. According to surveys conducted in 40 sites related to hijacked journals, it was understood that victims often belong to developing countries. Those journals are being targeted primarily due to their broad and various scope or topics (such as The Journal of Technology).

In some cases, the forgers use the weaknesses in the TCP/IP protocol [3] among which they can name "sending faked call emails" (email spoofing) to researchers with prestigious institutions address for publishing articles in fake journals [4]. Figure 1 shows number of published papers in some hijacked journals per issue (the last available issues, some journals have not more than four issues). According to this figure, the number of paper tended to increase in each issue because forgers used many deception techniques for cheating of authors and for each issue they will receive more papers from authors. However, after a time authors will understand that the journal is faked and number of paper in next issues eventually decrease. Previously, invalid and hijacked journals discussion has been raised in [5], [6] and general guidelines to deal with them are given to researchers. However, this paper aims to provide a simple approach to researchers so that they can identify fake journals.

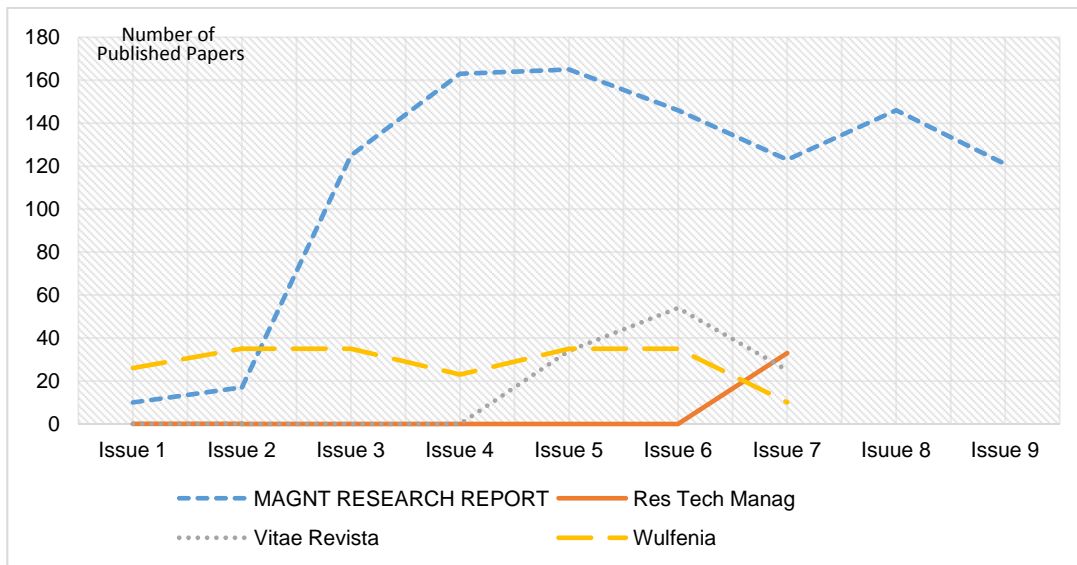


Figure 1. Number of published papers in some hijacked journals per issue (the last available issues)

2. Our Approach to Identify Hijacked Journals

Generally, forgers consider selecting the targeted Journals from one of the reputable journals indexed in Thomson Reuters, Scopus, PubMed, ISC etc. And the necessity of using our approach is that investigated journal is indexed in the mentioned websites. Table 1 shows our approach; how to use this table and attributes are described in the following. It should be noted that all the attributes are Boolean.

Table 1. Hijacked Journals identification table

Features	Page Rank	Journal Seek	Archive Availability	Domain Registration Time	Call for Papers	Visitor's Countries
Page Rank	█	P	P	P	X	X
Journal Seek	P	█	P	P	P	P
Archive Availability	P	P	█	P	X	X
Domain Registration Time	P	P	P	█	X	X
Call for Papers	X	P	X	X	█	X
Visitor's Countries	X	P	X	X	X	█

To use the Table 1, that is enough to extract quantities for each features according to what has been described. Then, if two features with the value 1 are coincided (in horizontal and vertical line) in one or more of the boxes that are marked with the letter P, investigated journal has been hijacked. If the features with the value 1 are coincided in no box P, they must be coincided at least three boxes X, to be identified as a hijacked journal. Otherwise, the investigated journal website will be an original one.

Page ranking: fake journals usually are not assigned for the high ranking. If the assessed journal website does not have ranking, value of the feature would be one (use this site for page ranking: <http://www.whatsmypr.net>).

Indexed in the journal seek website: This website maintains a list of publications (journals) together with their Web sites and can give us valuable information. If any web site were not registered in it for ISSN of reviewed journal, value of the feature would be equal to one. Using this feature alone may not be an appropriate indicator for the identification of hijacked journals, because this website does not have all the journals data and in some cases have been deceived by forgers. (<http://www.jokulljournal.com> or Jökull journal forgers have deceived this website and registered the faked journal URL).

The availability of previous numbers: forgers usually request a username and password to have access the previous journal issues or only to index abstracts of articles. If the investigated Journal has this feature on the website, the value of this feature will be equal to one.

Domain lifetime: Forgers usually register the fake website domain shortly before making the fake web site. Therefore, web sites domain of fake journals should have been registered in recent years, while the existing articles in the archive are related to several years ago. This feature also will be one, if domain lifetime of the website does not comply with existing articles archive.

Call for papers: hijacked journals usually attempt to send call emails to attract their victims. They get the victims email by the existing articles in low-level journals and conferences.

Entrant countries to website: Generally, hijacked journals victims are from certain countries. It is in the case that reputable journals have visitors from all over the world. If a Journal website has visitors belonging to few countries, value of the feature would be one. To obtain information about website visitors, Alexa website can used (<http://www.alexa.com>).

Table 2 (in Appendix) shows a list of Hijacked journals with extracted quantities for each feature that mention above. Researcher can use these features for future research in this domain.

3. Conclusion

In the increasing development of research and academic centers, number of research conducted has also increased. Meanwhile, it is necessary for researchers to carefully select and authenticate their target journals for publishing their papers. We present a simple approach for detection of hijacked journals based on main feature of these journals that can be used by researchers without any special knowledge. This feature can be combined with other methods for future research work.

References

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Appendix

Table 2. Hijacked Journals with extracted quantities for each feature

Fake Journal Address	PR	Domain Registration Time	Archive Availability	Website Indexed in journal seek	Call for Papers
http://www.afinidad.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://balticajournal.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.bothalia.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.britishedu.org.uk	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.cadmo.org/index.php	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://processengineering.net	No	Normal	Yes	No	Yes
http://ciencia-e-tecnica.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://sanidadediciones.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://epistemologia-journal.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.ivic-gob.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://iheringiaserie.bdssmgdl.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.jotechno.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://brisjast.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.martinia.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.nationalpark-berchtesgaden.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://naukpublication.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://nautilusjournal.net	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://mitt-klosterneuburg.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.styleinternational.net	No	Normal	No	No	Yes
http://www.penseejournal.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://lriinc.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://skhyber.com	No	Suspicious	Yes	No	Yes
http://sylvan.ibles.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://terapevticheskiiarkhiv.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://vitae-udea.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://psc.tomaspubs.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.ssdr.sciencerecord.com	Yes	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://jkljournal.org	Yes	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.jokulljournal.com	Yes	Suspicious	No	Yes	Yes
http://www.tekstijournal.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes

Visitor's country of the Fake journals : Suspicious
Indexing of the Fake journals : Thomson-Reuters

Table 2. Hijacked Journals with Extracted Quantities for Each Features (Continue)

Fake Journal Address	PR	Domain Registration Time	Archive Availability	Website Indexed in journal seek	Call for Papers
http://psc.tomaspubs.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://chm.tomaspubs.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://ss.tomaspubs.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.recentscience.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.multidisciplinarywulfenia.org	Yes	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
www.wulfeniajournal.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
www.wulfeniajournal.at	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://jsrad.org	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.web-journal.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes
http://www.ripublication.com/ijamm.htm	Yes	Normal	No	No	No
http://www.ejpasoci.com	No	Suspicious	No	No	Yes

Visitor's country of the Fake journals : Suspicious
Indexing of the Fake journals : Thomson-Reuters