

Dental Council of India Criteria for Research Publications: Need for revision

The publication record in any academic institution is a key factor for jobs, promotion and funding opportunities. The culture of 'Publish or Perish' has led to a surge in unethical practices of 'pay and publish trash' in academic institutions of India.¹ Today, there are several dubious journals publishing articles for profit without scrutinizing their scientific validity. These journals have been called predatory or pseudo journals.² Several surveys have revealed that a majority of the world's predatory journals and predatory authorship are based in India.³⁻⁷ The major reasons behind this problem are the regulations of mandatory publications for jobs/promotions, incentives for publication in institutions, incompetence of researchers, inadequate funds and infrastructure, commercialization of research publishing and lack of evaluation system of research publications at the institution and national levels.^{1,4,5} The University Grants Commission (UGC), a statutory body of the Government of India, has taken this matter seriously and formed the Consortium for Academic Research and Ethics (CARE) to promote research integrity in India.⁸

Predatory journals are also found in dentistry. Considering the obvious practice of predatory publishing in dental colleges of India, the Dental Council of India (DCI), the statutory body which regulates dental education in India, should revisit the criteria related to publication. Currently, the DCI guidelines consider only PubMed/Medline-indexed journals in category I (Table I).⁹ However, it does not mention specifically about other databases including reliable databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. On the other hand, Scopus and Web of Science-indexed journals are considered by national academic regulatory organizations such as the UGC-CARE list of approved journals by UGC and National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development.^{10,11} These differences in the guidelines of various statutory bodies of India regulating academic institutions create confusion among dental researchers in choosing journals for publication.

The other concern is regarding category III of the publication guidelines by the DCI, which considers journals published by deemed universities/dental institutions/Indian Dental Association (Table I). In essence, journals indexed in any database are considered under this category without distinguishing between predatory and legitimate journals. Such blanket approval provides ample scope for predatory publishing. Thus, it is necessary to revise the DCI guidelines to bring them in consonance with the UGC-CARE and NIRF policies. The revision is necessary to prevent confusion in choosing a journal and

TABLE I. Categories of publications suggested by the Dental Council of India

Category	Description	Points
I	Journals indexed in PubMed–Medline Journals published by Indian/international dental specialty associations approved by the Dental Council of India	15
II	Medical/dental journals published by government health universities awarding a dental degree or government universities awarding a dental degree Original research/study approved by the ICMR/similar government bodies Author of text/reference book concerned to respective speciality PhD or any other similar additional qualification after Master's in Dental Sciences	10
III	Journals published by deemed universities/dental institutions/Indian Dental Association Contribution to chapters in a textbook	5

also to prevent publication of research in predatory journals. The DCI should also institute different measures to control the predatory publishing in dental institutions of India.

Conflicts of interest. Nil

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