



## EDITORIAL

The issue of predatory journals and substandard publications is a major concern in research environment and is existent in all the countries of the world. The problem is even more in developing countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Nigeria, etc. Due to a huge human resource in India, the problem is furthermore serious to be tackled. The University Grant Commission (UGC) in India is trying its best to tackle the issue for a long time. The UGC itself tried to bring up a list of acceptable journals not less than three times before the advent of CARE list. Every time, some predatory journals find their way into the corresponding list and that the UGC kept on changing the list is an evidence of the same. Also, in that process, some proper good quality journals used to miss out from the list. And there appears to be no perfect solution for the same. Where are the things going wrong? Definitely, a few decades ago we never heard of these problems. Why have the situation changed over the years?

May be the answers to these questions lie in another question.

Did we earlier have stringent requirements of a particular number of publications by an individual for a promotion (or getting recruited) in the academic career? The answer is “No”. It was the quality of research which was more important than the quantity (i.e., the number). In fact, probably many of the greatest scientists and Noble laureates of past would not have become professors had that requirement of minimum of 10 publications (say) been there for promotion to that level.

Certainly, it is this recent compulsion for adherence to the requirements (mainly in terms of quantity) from statutory bodies that is resulting in unethical and/or substandard publications and predatory journals. And the situation is not going to drastically change even if we keep on coming up with different lists of accepted journals every now and then.

Nevertheless, whatever may be the reason, the ultimate onus of poor publications is on individual authors. And the predatory journals are just taking advantage of the situation and making profit. There is, thus, an urgent requirement to reconsider and analyse the whole situation both at the individual level and at the level of statutory bodies.

Samrat Dey