

Correspondence

Facts about journal publishing in open access policy

Sir,

I read with interest the editorial by Satyanarayana where he mentions that open access (OA) of journals is one of the changing aspects of journal publishing in modern day¹. This system is a blessing for scientific communities because it is easily available in digital form and allows user to read, download, copy, distribute, and print^{2,3} without any barrier, thus increases impact of the published material. The progress of scientific knowledge in any field depends on retrieval and accessibility of relevant literature² and in this regard archiving⁴ and access⁵ of OA literature plays a major role. In self archiving, the author can upload preprint or postprint versions in OA digital platform^{2,5,6} and use personal website, institutional archive, departmental archive, inter- and intra-disciplinary archive for this purpose^{2,6}. Self-archiving can be Green OA^{2,6} which allows uploading postprint version and Pale Green² OA which allows uploading preprint version of scholar work. Open access journals are another source of OA literature and provide postprint or copy edited version² of a published article. When publishers allow immediate OA to all published material, it is known as Gold OA^{2,5,7}. Sometimes publishers make scholarly article available after an embargo period, identified as delayed open access⁷. When subscription based journals allow OA to a limited number of scholarly articles, it is known as hybrid open access⁷. Open access in digital platform allows free access and reduced expenses for printing and distribution⁵ unlike traditional printing and subscription based journals. But to host a digital platform by using modern technology and archive in cyber space increase expenditure of journal publishing⁵ and put additional economic burden to OA publication^{3,5}. Economically sustainability is one of the main supports for long lasting of any journal³ and it comes from either authors pay model or from external supports

like public funding, membership fees, users consortia, advertising, institutional subscriptions and service sales³. In OA publication except public funding and advertising there are less chances to generate revenue from any author external sources to fulfill publication cost. Advertising generates small revenue³ and public funding sources like universities, research laboratories pay for their organization member publication^{3,5}. In this scenario, the only feasible option left for OA journal is to generate revenue through authors pay model. According to Subar², most of the OA journals do not charge authors but most of conventional and non OA journals do and usually authors' fee for publication is paid by author sponsors or waived off². Now-a-days fraud publishers use this authors pay model to generate money in dishonest way as termed as "Cash Cow" model in the editorial¹. This is one of the biggest threats in the era of OA journals for scientific communities. Due to pressure for publication scholars fall in their traps. They should be careful about these fake journals because now-a-days quality of publication is more acceptable than quantity of publication⁸. Though there are no foolproof methods to find out fake journals in open access platform, but scholars can take certain measures to avoid these kind of counterfeit journals. First, they should check scope of the journal as most of these fake journals publish articles from different fields of science⁹ within a short period of time^{9,10}, which is usually not possible for a normal regular journal. Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association(OASPA) clearly mentions in their code of conduct that an OA journal should have editorial boards or other governing bodies consisting of recognized specialists from the field(s) that constitute the scope of the journal⁸. OASPA also suggested that there should be some form of peer review and it should be clearly mentioned on the journal or publisher's website⁸. The authors should also check the details of the editorial board members or reviewers

available in journal home page like phone number with ISD codes which help to identify countries they belong to, institutes they work in and their details like websites from where scholars can obtain information. Regarding publication fee OASPA has clearly stated in the code of conduct that the publication fee or charges in the OA journal should be clearly mentioned on the home page and should be easily located by potential authors⁸. Finally, scholar should check contact details of the publisher provided in the journal or publisher's home page as most of the time it is an internet based invoice^{1,10} and does not have any postal code and phone number and bank account details available, which can help to identify the publishing place and thus are strong indicators of "Predatory Publishers".

All OA publishers are not predatory publisher⁹ but this situation can create many problems for authors and readers. This problem may be solved when open access becomes free for authors like its users⁶. This is an ideal OA and termed as Diamond or Platinum OA⁶ and will give a new direction of OA publication.

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