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**\*Correspondence**

Venkataramana Kandi  
**Email:**  
ramana20021@gmail.com

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## Open Access Journal Publications, Impact Factors, and Indexing: The Authors Make Impact and not the Journals

Venkataramana Kandi<sup>\*1,2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Editor-in-Chief, PSM Microbiology

<sup>2</sup>Member Asian Council for Science Editors (ASCE)

<sup>3</sup>Department of Microbiology, Prathima Institute of Medical Sciences, Karimnagar-505417 Telangana, India.

**Abstract:**

No abstract is available.



## From the Editor-In-Chief

I express my deep gratitude and consider it an honor to be appointed as the editor-in-chief of PSM Microbiology, an international journal. I would welcome scientific articles within the scope of the journal for submission, review, and potential publication. As an open access (OA) journal, the PSM Microbiology is still in its infancy and is being published quarterly (Iqbal, 2019) for the past six years.

In recent years there has been an increasing debate about the quality of OA publishers/journals. I would consider there are some predatory practices employed by selected open access (OA) publishers, who run publications in a pay-per-article fashion. However, these practices by predatory publishers are undermining the sincerity of some dedicated OA publishers like the PSM, Science and Education Publishing, among many others. I would like the scientific community to consider PSM Microbiology as an opportunity to portray their research findings without any financial and other barriers that include long delays in the review and publication of their valuable research findings.

The standard of journal publications has recently been questioned. This criticism was directed and intended against the emerging and ever-increasing numerous journals/publishers in the past decade. Most of which are open access journals/publishers and routinely charge publication fees. The scientific community, therefore, became cautious regarding such journals/publishers. However, researchers, institutions, and universities globally are inclined to encourage journals/publishers that are indexed by the PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Science citation index (SCI), emerging sources citation index (ESCI), and those which had impact factors generated by the Journal citation reports (JCR) calculated by the Clarivate Analytics. Considering several factors that include huge article publication charges levied by the impact journals, long delays in publication times, authorship issues, methodological errors, and professional misconduct has recently been found accounting to article retractions from

journals indexed with reputed agencies and those with high impact factors. These practices by any means don't uphold scientific standards. This signifies the fact that what we publish matters and not where we publish. Scientific communications are best evaluated by the peers, pioneers, and experts in a particular field and not just measured based on the indexation status, and the impact factors of the journals.

Journal publications have enormously increased in the past decade. Precisely, there appears to be a huge rush of journal publishers in the last ten years. There is a big debate on which journal to choose, the indexation of the journal, and the impact factor of the journal. Also, there is an abnormal surge of publishing houses claiming to publish scientific research. The cost of publication also appears to be a hindrance while choosing a journal to publish your paper. Most publishers, especially the renowned ones either ask for thousands of dollars as publishing fees or publish the paper as non-open access, which will only be available to readers on subscription. Some journals will be considered a liberal waiver policy but follow a laborious submission and publication process.

In my own experiences, I could remember myself submitting to newer publishing houses, which would waive off the publication charges. It was easy though, but I had to be very cautious about the journal I choose and the quality of my published paper. In most instances, fortunately, the publishers/journals which I had chosen were processing the manuscript according to the committee on publication ethics (COPE) recommendations. All my papers were peer-reviewed, and depending on the recommendations of the reviewers, I would amend the manuscript. In most instances, there was a liberty to not worry about the reviewer comments (depends on the journal/publisher), but I always made sure that in case of appropriate reviewer queries, I made necessary revisions. This had improved my publications standard as evidenced by the increasing number of citations that I continuously receive for my papers.

Now, there was one significant observation I made through the publication process found in most of the publishing houses. Although the papers were reviewed, and the authors revised the manuscript, the papers were hardly edited, copy edited, or technically edited before being published. This increases the number of errors in the published manuscripts. In my case, during my early researcher days, I used to be skeptical to approach the publishers for corrections after the papers were published. The reason being all my papers were published with no publication or processing charges. But later I decided to approach them and made sure that my papers were published with the least errors and would ask for corrections even after the papers were published online. This was always possible since most of the journals were online, and even if it was a print publisher, the print editions would take some time before being published.

I have until now been able to publish more than 200 research papers, and in most instances, I published in the journals which would waive off the publication charges completely or are free of publication charges, and the ones that generously considered discounts. I was also not inclined to submit my papers to the famous publishers since they had a very lengthy process of submission, which includes the online submission system that is very laborious. Also, I was unable to submit to other journals with PubMed indexation and journals with impact factors, as most would ask for huge publication charges. Although some publishers offer free

publication in their subscription-based (not open access) journals, the published content can be accessed by the readers only after paying the charges. Given the revolution of OA publication, several popular publishers have introduced the hybrid method of publication wherein, the authors can pay the publication fees and in turn, their paper will be made available as OA. Despite this several researchers face financial difficulties to pay for OA fees because not many institutions support researchers with publication charges.

Although the researchers who conducted the research cannot be completely blamed for the errors in the published paper, it is their responsibility to minimize the errors and improve the standard of their publication. Journal publishers should make sure that the articles are appropriately reviewed and are carefully edited for errors before the publication of the manuscript.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

## **REFERENCES**

Iqbal, M.N., 2019. Letter From the Editor-In-Chief. PSM Microbiology, 4(4): 93-94.