

Faculty Development Programme on Fostering Ethical Practices in Digital Publishing

A five-day Faculty Development Programme on 'Fostering Ethical Practices in Digital Publishing: Approaches for Promoting Responsible and Transparent Research Communication' was organised by the Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi in collaboration with the Academic and Administrative Development Centre, Academic Staff College, Amity University Haryana (AUH) during July 10-14, 2023. The aim of the event was to delve into various aspects related to ethical practices in digital publishing, including plagiarism detection and prevention, data integrity and reproducibility, authorship and contributorship, conflicts of interest, peer review transparency, open access and licensing, digital preservation, and the role of technology in promoting responsible research communication. Around eighty faculty members representing diverse academic disciplines participated in the event.

The programme commenced with the opening remarks by Chief Organizer, Dr. Sanjna Vij, Deputy Director, Academic Staff College, Amity University Haryana emphasizing the vital role of publishing in high-impact journals to enhance the visibility and recognition of our research. In today's digital era, maintaining ethical standards in publication practices is of utmost importance. Dr. Vij urged all researchers and professionals to uphold honesty, integrity, credibility, and transparency in their work. As responsible contributors to the academic community, it is our duty to ensure that our research is conducted with the highest ethical standards, promoting the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of society.

Prof. Madhukar, Pro Vice Chancellor, Amity University Haryana emphasized the utmost significance of ethical practices in research publishing. Prof Madhukar shed light on two essential aspects of Research Ethics, 'Conduct of Research' and 'Publication of Research'. Prof. Madhukar underscored the increasing relevance of such workshops, particularly in the current era where AI-powered tools contribute to a rise in unethical research and publication practices. He highlighted the week-long sessions' essence, which offers a 'Hands-On' and practical approach to learning about digital publishing, ensuring an immersive and valuable learning experience for all attendees.

Prof. U N Singh, Chair Professor and Dean, Faculty of Arts, AUH highlighted the importance of adhering to ethical research and publishing standards. He shared a compelling anecdote about a Bengali poet who had extraordinary poems but lacked documented versions of his

work, emphasizing the need for researchers to avoid such pitfalls. Prof. Singh recommended all researchers to preserve all versions of their research papers to facilitate a thorough review and extraction of crucial points from previous iterations. Moreover, he stressed the significance of harnessing technology to our advantage and familiarizing ourselves with the latest features of common software to enhance efficiency and productivity.

During the first session, Prof. Sumit Narula, Director, ASCO, AUH and Editor-in-chief {*Journal of Content, Community and Communication* (a Scopus Indexed Q3 journal)} addressed the audience by shedding light on the unethical practices prevalent in the academic publishing domain. He emphasized the alarming issue of researchers being misled into publishing in Fake/Cloned and Predatory journals. Prof. Narula provided valuable insights into various metrics used in academic research, such as Impact Factor, H-Index, i-10 index, and Cite Score, discussing their relevance in the context of current research publishing trends. The next was the question-answer segment where participants sought clarity on safeguarding measures against unethical publishing practices followed by practical exercises.

Further, after the presentation of the brief report of the previous session, Prof. Narula started the session wherein he shared a five-step formula to identify cloned and predatory journals, advising attendees to watch out for obvious red flags, such as spelling errors on journal websites and the absence of contact details for editorial teams, particularly official institutional email IDs. Furthermore, he stressed the crucial need for researchers to be well-informed about the unethical nexus in academic publishing and encouraged them to approach their work with a critical mindset while adopting guided journal-checking practices to protect the integrity of research and knowledge. Towards the conclusion of the session, Prof. Narula introduced a cutting-edge mobile application he developed, the Amity Quality Journal Checker Mobile App. This revolutionary app serves as a powerful tool to differentiate between legitimate and fake academic journals, further empowering researchers to make informed decisions about their publishing choices. The session concluded with a variety of practical exercises and engaging case studies.

Further, the participants were guided by Dr. Gynaneshwar Kumar Rao, Associate Professor, ASAS, AUH through crucial aspects of academic writing, spanning from preparation to publishing. Dr. Rao emphasized the importance of coherence among all sections of a research paper, ensuring a seamless connection to the paper's central theme. He aptly described good paper writing as a form of storytelling, capturing the essence of effective communication.

Moreover, the concept of ‘reproducibility of research’ was expounded upon by Dr. Rao. This pertains to the ability to reproduce the results and findings of one's research using the same methods, allowing anyone other than the author to validate the study's outcomes. Through diverse examples and interactive worksheets, participants gained insight into various manuscript types and learned about crafting different sections of a research paper. Additionally, Dr. Rao addressed the common issues that lead to manuscript rejection, including problems with style, format, grammar, and overall paper presentation. The session concluded with a variety of practical exercises and engaging case studies.

Prof. Narula took another session on a vital concern for all researchers- the challenge of being accepted by journals indexed in reputed databases like Scopus/Web of Sciences. Drawing from his own experiences of publishing with renowned publishers like Emerald Publishing, PLOS (Public Library of Science), Wiley, etc., he explained the copyright licensing and Open Access Publishing Business Model- Platinum/Diamond Open Access, Gold Open Access, Hybrid, Subscription Models and lastly, Green/Archiving Model. He imparted an important hands-on skill to the attendees with the use of Reference Management software like Mendeley, EndNote, and Citavi; the use of Mendeley and how it can be synced with MS Word allowing easy and quick referencing.

Dr. Manrai spoke about the Do's and Don'ts when targeting High Impact Factor Journals. He commenced his session with the selection of research topics and the common challenges faced in writing a quality manuscript. He informed the participants about renowned indexing lists for different academic disciplines such as Social Sciences (SSCI- Social Science Citation Index), Sciences (SCI- Science Citation Index), ABDC (A* and A category), ABS (Associations of Business Schools, UK) and FT (Financial Times) 50. “It's wise to target journals indexed in multiple renowned research databases; inclusion in multiple indexes is indicative of the journal's reliability, long-term quality, and fair publication practices,” said Dr. Manrai with many High Impact Factor journal publications to his credit. He shared useful tips for crafting paper Title, Introduction, and Abstract along with processes pertaining to literature review, research design, research gap analysis, and hypothesis development. The session concluded with a variety of practical exercises and engaging case studies.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof P B Sharma, Amity University Haryana graced the occasion with his Valedictory Address. Prof. Sharma expressed heartfelt joy and pride in AUH for providing

an exceptional platform for esteemed experts in the field of academic research and publishing. The programme served as an opportunity to acknowledge and enlighten researchers and fellow faculty members on the intricacies of publishing in High Impact Factor research journals. In his address, Prof. Sharma firmly discouraged any intentional and deliberate indulgence in unethical research and publishing practices. Drawing from his vast teaching and research experiences at highly reputed institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, he reminded everyone of how such practices can adversely impact the researcher's reputation and tarnish the image of the institution they represent. Prof. Sharma extended his congratulations to all participants for actively participating in and benefiting from the enriching insights and learning experiences provided by the Hands-on workshop. He assured everyone of the university's commitment to organizing many more such enlightening sessions in the future. In conclusion, Prof. Sharma's words echoed the spirit of academic integrity and dedication to quality research, fostering a culture of excellence at Amity University Haryana.