

What Are the Predilections of Doctoral Scholars on Indexing, Peer-Review, And Journal Publishing After Exposure to The Research Publication Course?

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Abstract

Aim The present survey aims to understand the preferences developed by doctoral scholars to the ideas on research and publication after undergoing training on a course titled “Research Publication.”

Background UGC recommended a mandatory training course on research publication and ethics for Ph.D. scholars to improve the quality of research undertaken and their knowledge base on research publication. The course would expose scholars to the concepts of research integrity, publication ethics, techniques to identify predatory journals, and research misconduct.

Design/Method A survey research design was utilized to understand the kind of preferences doctoral scholars develop on concepts of indexing and publication (indexing parameters, openaccess publications, ways to identify predatory journals, the peerreview process of journals, publication companies, sharing of data sets with journals, and reasons for rejections of manuscripts) by journals after exposure to course paper on research publication. The syllabus of research publication and ethics prescribed by UGC, the curriculum of the research publication course of Christ University, and previous research articles formed the basis for the formulation of questions. The researcher acquired demographic information and information on publication history from the participants. A total of 35 doctoral scholars from various disciplines and both genders responded to the survey questions. Scholars who had completed at least a year in the university were excluded from participation. Scholars undergoing training in research publication course paper for the past four months were invited to participate.

Findings The survey included a substantial proportion of female scholars of the age group range 20-30, and most of the scholars had completed their Master's degree before enrolling in the Ph.D. course. The survey results revealed that scholars had considerable knowledge of reasons for rejection of manuscripts, the peer review process, methods to identify predatory journals, open-access publication, indexing agencies, indexing parameters, and publication agencies.

Limitations The study comprised a limited sample of Ph.D. scholars only from one university. Moreover, the majority of the scholars had limited or no experience in publishing documents in Journals.

Implications The survey helps doctoral scholars to understand the concepts of indexing and publication. It also enables them to apply this knowledge and reevaluate the indexing parameters, indexing, method of peer review, and other criteria before deciding to submit manuscripts to journals.

Future Research Researchers can acquire views of scholars from various universities across India where the “research publication” course has been introduced. By gathering information from a substantial proportion of male scholars and comparing it with female scholars, researchers can explore scholars' gender differences in preferences. The choices of scholars who have experience in publishing can be compared with that of scholars who had limited publishing experience to understand any underlying similarities and differences.

Keywords Doctoral Scholars, Preferences, Indexing, Peerreview, Publication

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ph.D.'s initial purpose was to prepare students for an academic career (Wildy, Peden, and Chan, 2015). From the early 1990s, the U.K. Universities diversified their doctorate programs catering to scholars' diverse needs from different professions, which led to the titles 'professional' doctorate and practice-based, practice-led doctorate (QAA, 2011). With time, universities started focusing on research-oriented education. The current academic career inevitably demands a doctorate as a requirement. The Ph.D. is the foundation to prepare scholars for independence in scientific pursuit. It involves a research-based focus on a chosen subject as the student studies to become proficient in a particular field. These academic degrees enable students for a lifetime

of research, whereas professional degrees make the student an authority of the chosen profession. Many other avenues, including industry, have opened up where people with doctorate degrees are employed (Sahay, 2015). After completing a Ph.D., scholars' information is narrow and specialized and often does not meet the employers' needs (Chiteng Kot & Hende, 2012). The isolation experienced by Ph.D. students lessens their opportunities to develop professional skills-sets like collaboration, partnership, corporate communication, and political dexterity (Borrell-Damian, Morais, and Smith 2015; Nerad, 2004). Ph.D. students may also lack the robust professional networks required to enter professional life and flourish within it. A Ph.D.'s relevance to meet society's needs is in question (Lee, Brennan, & Green, 2009). Additionally, society and the government insist on universities producing more relevant academic courses and research outcomes. Finally, universities provide more attention to encouraging professional doctorates to generate income and build active collaborations with industries to advance research prospects and funding for research (Jones,2018).

Gray and Drew (2008) revealed that only a few students registered in doctoral programs involve in formal academic writing, which is good enough for acceptance in peer-reviewed journals of eminence, not to speak of citations. Reputed universities/institutions insist scholars must make one or two publications before submitting their thesis. Most Indian doctoral students are not trained for this. Only a few universities in India have made publications obligatory. However, they do not insist on the value of the journals they need to publish. Nevertheless, scholars feel that writing research papers should happen after attaining a postdoctoral assignment or are employed as a faculty. Writing under pressure to find a job or project may offer a negative experience and would be annoying if one gets into that circumstance.

With time, academic culture places more emphasis on publication. The focus shifted from teaching to research in doctoral studies. The new norm of today is "publish or perish." Regular publications and successful publication of research act as valuable instruments to display the academic rigor and bring recognition to their institutions. Besides, it helps in the scholar's individual progress and growth as well. The total number of publications and periodic publications is a standard to measure a scholars' capability and improve the chances of being recruited.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars experience several challenges while attempting to publish in reputed journals. It takes time to learn and produce successful writing in academic journals. Therefore, students should locate good journals interested in accepting the themes and methods (Knight & Steinbach, 2008). Over the years, there has been a proliferation of academic publishers, with over 28,000 active scientific journals as of 2014 (Ware & Mabe, 2015). With an increase in the number of scholarly publishers, there has been an upsurge in untrustworthy, 'predatory' journals of ill standing, uncertain integrity, and low academic values. These 'predatory' journals entice the attention of doctoral applicants and other junior scholars in evolving countries. As a result of the publish or perish culture, they are excessively stressed to publish their manuscripts (Shaw, 2013). The consequence of peer reviewers that is facilitated by the conventional publication bias is innate. Nonsignificant outcomes can be deprived of publication by peer reviewers. They may never get published or go through numerous journals, leading to postponement and eventual release in journals with inadequate prominence or a low impact factor or a language other than English (Murad et al.,2014).

Counting the number of publications is outdated. Presently, academicians' reputations depend on the type of manuscript and journal in which the document is published and not on the number of articles published (Clark & Thompson,2016). Thus, the researcher should consider several aspects like impact factor for a journal and h-index for authors and organizations.

According to a framework on peerreview bias, failure to assess the quality of studies, poor reproducibility, specific tendencies like personal stringency vs. lenience, cultural aspects, and refusal to indicate their conflict of interest are underlying causes for bias during the peer review process. The inability to recruit knowledgeable reviewers and high dropout rates of reviewers are other reasons. Additionally, imposing changes in the manuscript, deleting or combining outcomes, reviewers' getting influenced by authors' characteristics like previous work, affiliation, ethnic group, language, or gender, and result-oriented bias like confirmation bias, conservatism are other influences (Haffar, Bazerbachi, & Murad,2019).

There are several peer review methods like single blind, double blind, tripleblind, and open review methods. Each of these methods has its advantages and disadvantages. Double blind peer review is advantageous as it prevents the reviewer from being biased against the author based on their country of origin or previous work (Peer Review,2014). Supporters of the open review method suggest that it increases transparency, inspires reviewers to be productive in their commentaries, and could avert plagiarism (O'Connor, Cousar, Lentini, Castillo, Halm, & Zeffiro,2017).

By improving their knowledge on concepts related to research publications like impact factor, publishing companies, peer review methods, biases held by reviewers, and the potential reasons for rejection of papers, researchers can improve their prospects of publications in reputed journals. Comprehensive knowledge

of these concepts among scholars can help them apply these appropriately to disseminate their research through scientific papers in reputed journals.

Need for the study

Research has played an inherent part in the progress of a nation. Nevertheless, research culture has evolved, and the current focus is on publication rather than meaningful contribution through the dissemination of research. There is an increasing amount of pressure built among doctoral scholars to publish to circulate their work, and develop their curriculum vitae. Scholars are expected to publish in high-quality, indexed journals with the rigorous peer review process. The University Grants Commission has placed new regulations to overcome the research writing skill deficiencies among many students. UGC recommends including training programs on writing skills and theme-based writing as an integral part of regular assignments. Besides, it reveals that peer reviewing classroom assignments will familiarize students with peer review culture at an early stage (University Grants Commission, 2019, July 31). Based on these recommendations, several universities and online platforms have offered research publications and research writing courses. These publications on publications have been instrumental in introducing scholars to several concepts on journals' indexing and peer review process. Therefore, having sound knowledge of the domain alone would not be sufficient. A scholar should clearly understand the challenging aspects of publication, indexing parameters, indexing agencies, and peer review processes.

Moreover, they must be able to apply and utilize this knowledge to broadcast their research findings. Publication pressure, implications of indexing, peer review, and intricate concepts related to the publication from a theoretical perspective and scholars' views have been discussed in isolation. Previous researchers have not attempted to understand the opinions of scholars on these aspects collectively. Hence, the investigator focused on understanding doctoral scholars' predilections and interpretations of the most preferred indexing agencies, the peer review process, selection norms of journals, and the average time taken by journals for publication.

Problem Statement

Ph.D. places immense pressure on students to publish manuscripts in research journals of great eminence. Since publication becomes a difficult task, scholars postpone working on research papers. Rejection of documents and comments from peer reviewers discourage them from publishing. Moreover, a lack of guidance and training on academic publishing leads to Ph.D. scholars submitting manuscripts to spurious journals. Publication becomes more of a competition and stress on Ph.D. scholars who cannot enjoy the pleasure of disseminating their results to the world. The mandatory requirement of publications in journals/conference proceedings for the award of doctoral degree has propagated predatory journals and conferences, which have abandoned classical peer review as quality control (University Grants Commission, 2019, July 31). UGC has formulated the research publication and ethics course to manage these challenges and equip scholars with sufficient skillsets (University Grants Commission, 2019, December). A positive research culture can be developed by encouraging scholars to understand the intricacies of publishing. This study helps the scholars to apply the concepts learned during the coursework to designate definite opinions.

Statement of Purpose

The researcher aimed to understand the preferences developed by doctoral scholars on concepts like indexing, indexing agencies, publication agencies, reasons for rejection of manuscripts, aspects related to the peer review process, publication process, and sharing of data sets of papers with journals after acquaintance to the research publication course. The researcher enumerates scholars' overall knowledge and aptitude to apply their proficiency on these notions by delineating their choices after presenting them with ideas on research publication during their four months of coursework classes. The prime research question of the study was

1. What kind of preferences doctoral scholars develop on concepts related to the publication process after acquaintance with the course paper on research publication?

The specific research questions focused on

2. What are the scholars' preferences for indexing, indexing agencies, indexing parameters, and publication companies that publish within a shorter time?

3. What techniques scholars prefer for selecting reviewers, and which type of peer-review method they consider appropriate for the researcher?

4. What are scholars' preferences on benefits of open-access publication, types of creative commons license that offer higher chances for misuse of data, and sharing of data sets with journals?

5. What preferences do scholars indicate about enrolling in journals, persons involved in the management of journals, and methods they employ to identify predatory journals?

6. Has scholars' approach towards research publication changed for the better after exposure to indexing and reviewing concepts?

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A brief survey was conducted on doctoral scholars of various disciplines at Christ University. The study intended to comprehend scholars' predilections on ideas associated with indexing and peerreview, such as the type of peer review that seemed appropriate and the services of which indexing agency was more comfortable to use. The investigator structured fifteen questions on indexing concepts, the peerreview process, and publications using google forms. The base for constructing questions was the syllabus of research publication ethics prescribed by UGC, the curriculum of the research publication course of Christ University, and previous research articles.

The study was conducted as a part of the coursework assignment for the course paper on research publication. Since the researcher had only one week to complete the survey and compile the study findings, it demanded conducting a pilot study. The researcher checked the questionnaire for wording and clarity and sent it to one of the peers to see if the google form was accessible. After that, the investigator sent the google form to scholars through emails and Whatsapp. Informed consent was obtained from scholars before their participation. Demographic information and information on their publication history were also obtained from the participants. The questions were multiple-choice questions with a maximum of six choices.

The questions on indexing included the primary reasons for the need to index journals. Scholars were also asked to select which indexing agencies' services they considered user-friendly among Scopus, Google Scholar, Web of Science, CrossRef, and Scimago. They were also requested to indicate which indexing parameter was appropriate to them among Impact Factor, Cite Score, h-index, g-index, and Euclidean Index. The investigator likewise structured queries on the peerreview process. Scholars were queried on the type of peer review that seems relevant to them amid singleblind, doubleblind, tripleblind, and openreview methods. They were also asked to suggest between prepublication and post-publication review, which would benefit a researcher. Scholars were questioned on the most predominant types of biases held by reviewers while reviewing manuscripts and the methods they deliberately used to identify reviewers to evaluate papers. Other types of questions comprised chief reasons for denunciations of documents by journals, standards to identify predatory journals indexed in reputed indexing agencies, and their opinions on sharing datasets with journals. They were requisitioned to specify among the roles of journal manager, site administrator, chief editor, and proofreader whose part they regarded irreplaceable. The researcher also queried scholars about the common creative license forms that offer more scope to misuse data. They were asked to designate which publishing agency takes a shorter period to publish among Elsevier, Springer, Sage, Taylor& Francis, and Wiley Online Library. The study did not utilize open-ended questions Since it aimed to recognize the preferences of scholars alone.

Participants

A total of 35 doctoral scholars from various disciplines of both genders responded to the survey questionnaire. Scholars who had finished at least a year in the university were exempted from participation. Doctoral scholars undergoing training in research publications for the past four months were invited to participate in the study to comprehend the publication course's influence on scholars' overall knowledge and preferences.

Data Analysis

The responses of the participants were recorded and subjected to percentage analysis. The patterns of predilections of scholars were then examined based on their choice of answers.

IV. RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

Table 1. Showing the gender distribution of Doctoral Scholars

Gender	Percentage
Female	68.6
Male	31.4

Table 2. Showing the age range of Doctoral Scholars

Age	Percentage
20-30	45.7
30-40	40.0

40-50

14.3

Table 3. Showing the educational qualification of Doctoral Scholars

Educational Qualification	Percentage
PG	74.3
M.Phil.	25.7

The survey conducted on 35 doctoral scholars comprised a substantial proportion of females in comparison to males. The majority of doctoral scholars belonged to the age range of 20-30, followed by 30-40, and a minor portion was 40-50 years of age. Before enrolment in the Ph.D. program, a considerable percentage of scholars had completed a Master's degree, and about one-fourth of scholars had finished an M.Phil. Degree.

Publication History of Doctoral Scholars

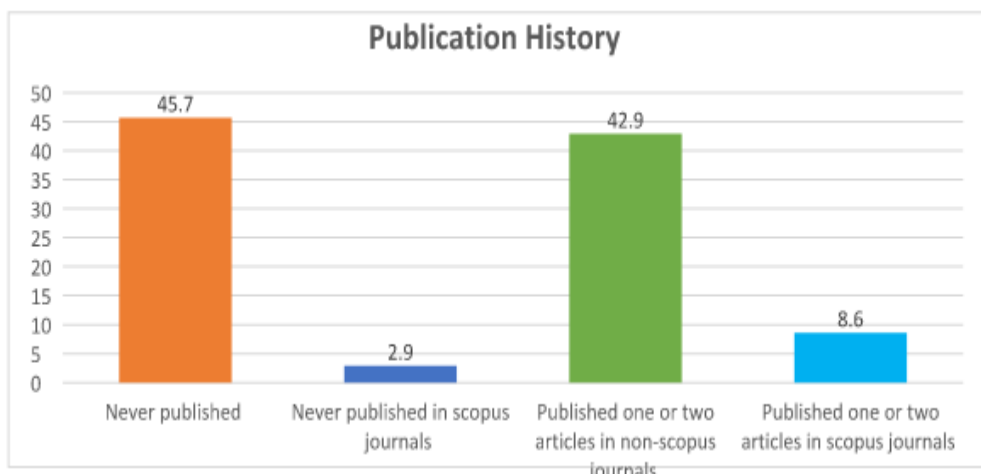


Figure 1. Showing the Publication history of doctoral scholars

The majority of the scholars voiced that they have never published in journals so far. Almost an equal proportion of them specified that they published at least one or two articles in non-Scopus journals. About one-twelfth of the participants had reported that they had published one or two articles in Scopusindexed journals. A minor proportion of them indicated that they had never published in the Scopusindexed journal.

Key Findings of The Survey

Thirty-five Ph.D. Scholars answered a survey on their preferences about indexing agencies, review process, publication companies, and other concepts related to the journals' publication process.

Reasons for indexing of Journals

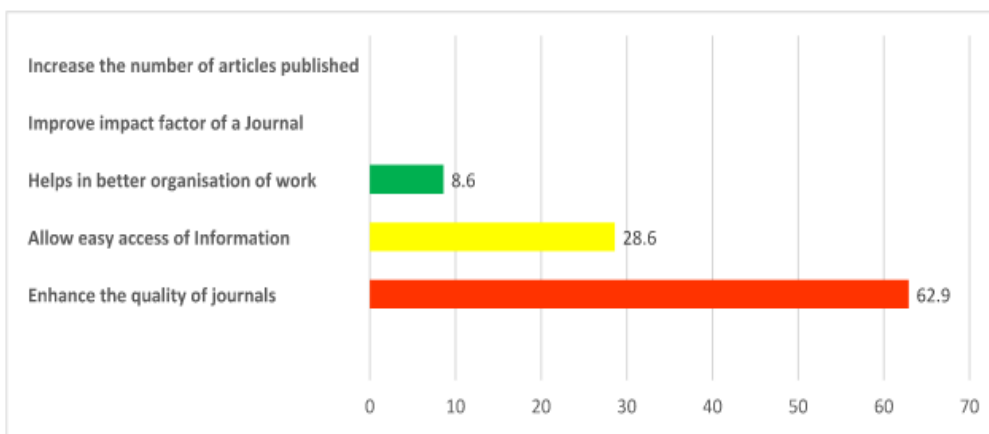


Figure 2. Showing the reasons for indexing journals

The investigator aimed to recognize the chief reasons why indexing was considered essential. The participants were asked to select from five different options: enhancing the quality of journals, allowing easy access to information, helping the better organization of work, improving the impact factor of a journal, and increasing the number of articles published. About 62.9% of scholars detailed that indexing aids in augmenting journals' quality, and 28.6% of scholars indicated that indexing was essential to allow easy access to information. About onetwelfth of the participants designated that indexing helps in better organization of work. Nevertheless, none of the participants shared that indexing was required to improve the journals' impact or increase the number of articles.

Reasons for desk rejection of manuscripts

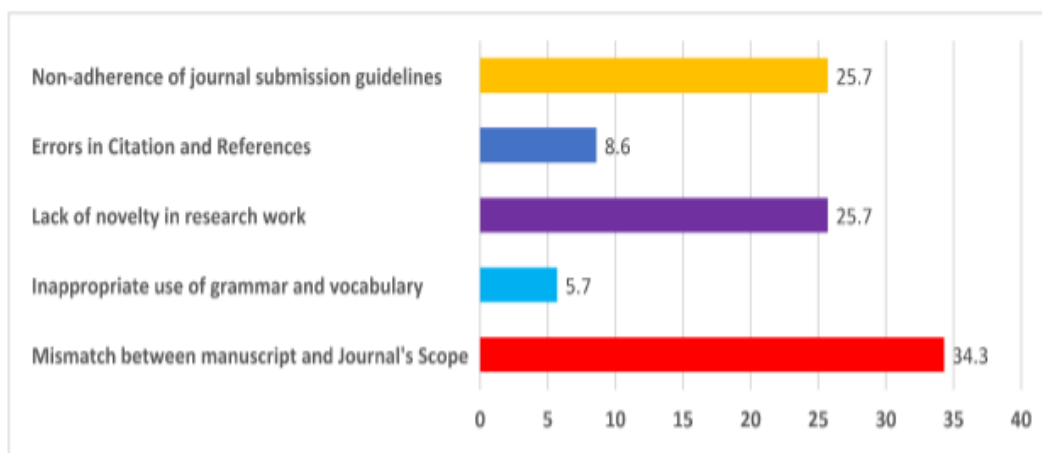


Figure 3. Showing the reasons for desk rejection of manuscripts

The desk rejection is a cause of concern for numerous authors. Most scholars stated that a mismatch between the prime objectives of the manuscript and the journal's scope is a crucial reason for the rejection of documents. One-fourth of scholars noted that the research work's lack of novel ideas leads journals to reject manuscripts. One-fourth of scholars detailed that a paper is more plausible to be rejected by a journal if the author does not adhere to the journals' guidelines. Inappropriate citations and references of sources were designated as reasons for the rejection of manuscripts by a minor proportion of scholars. A small ratio of them recognized that improper grammar and vocabulary could be probable reasons for rejections.

Indexing agencies

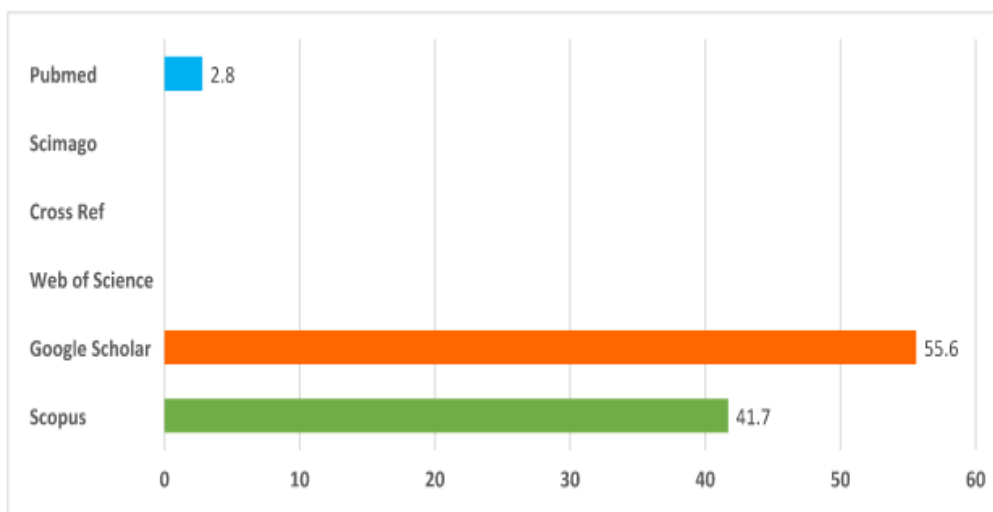


Figure 4. Showing the preferences of scholars on user-friendly indexing agencies

Several indexing agencies offer services to index the academic works of scholars. When scholars were asked to stipulate the functions of which indexing agencies were more comfortable to use, 55.6% of participants considered Google scholars' indexing services as simple and easier to use. Around 41.7% of scholars stated that

they favored the benefits of the Scopus indexing agency. A very meager portion of scholars observed PubMed as a user-friendly indexing agency. Nevertheless, none of the scholars selected CrossRef, Scimago, and Web of Science indexing agencies as user-friendly indexing companies.

Indexing Parameters

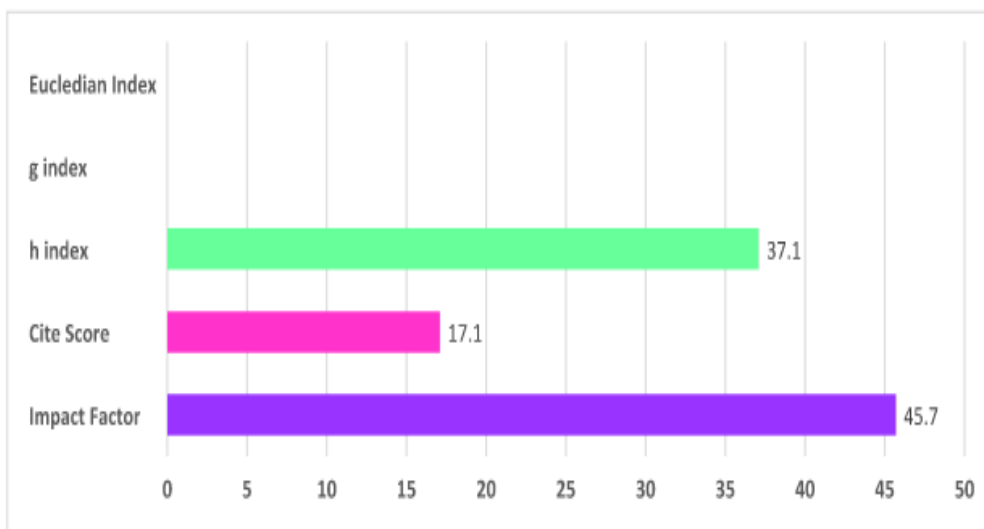


Figure 5. Showing the preferences of scholars on Indexing parameters

In the present time, the publication is crucial, and similarly, bearing in mind the indexing parameters to evaluate the eminence of the journals and professional standing is imperative. Some of the typical parameters include impact factors, cite scores, and h-index. Based on scholars' answers, it can be determined that 45.7% of scholars viewed the impact factor as relevant. The h-index was endorsed by 37.1% of scholars, and 17.1% of scholars felt the cite score was appropriate.

Type of reviews beneficial for scholars

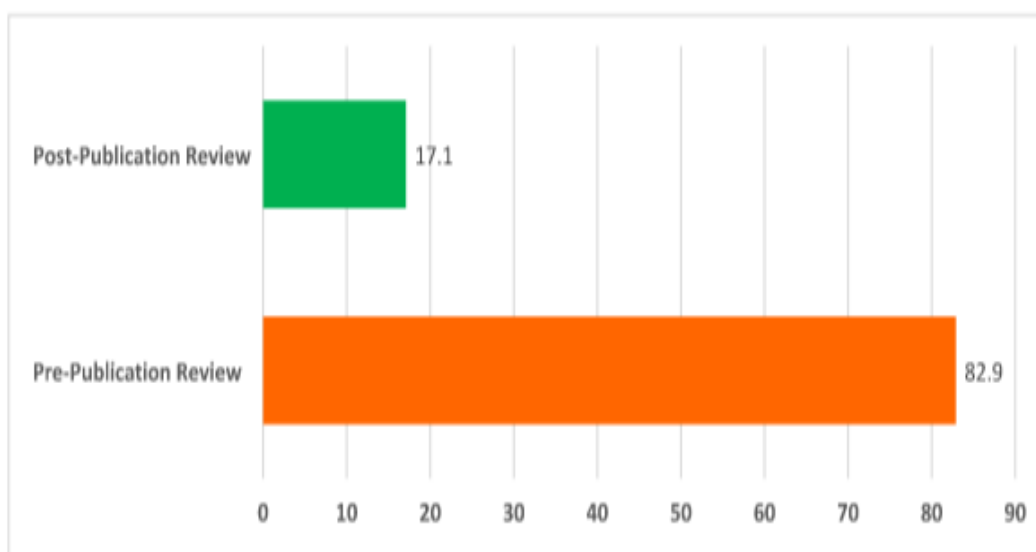


Figure 6. Showing the type of review method beneficial for research scholars

The majority of scholars revealed that prepublication review procedures would be more advantageous to researchers than the post-publication review. A minor proportion of scholars endorsed the concept of post-publication review.

Publication companies that enable rapid publication

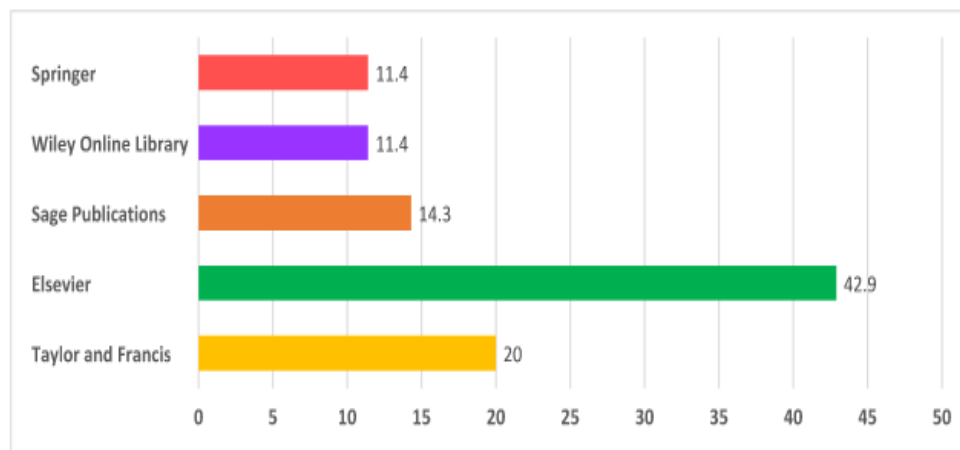


Figure 7. Showing the choice of research scholars on publishing companies that enable rapid publication

Several publishing companies are popular, and the journals associated with these companies are more in demand among researchers, academicians, and scholars for numerous reasons. To endure this tedious process of rejection and ensure rapid publication, scholars' lookout for multiple methods. One such way is to identify the journal's average time from receiving the manuscript, date of acceptance, and final publication online. Scholars specified that they identify publishing companies that publish work relatively faster based on their publication history in the current survey. About 42.9% of scholars stated that Elsevier published manuscripts speedily. Around 20% of them indicated that Taylor and Francis publish papers quickly. The scholars specified Sage Publication as a third preference; the doctoral scholars gave the publishing companies of Springer and Wiley's online library an equal weightage.

Peer review methods

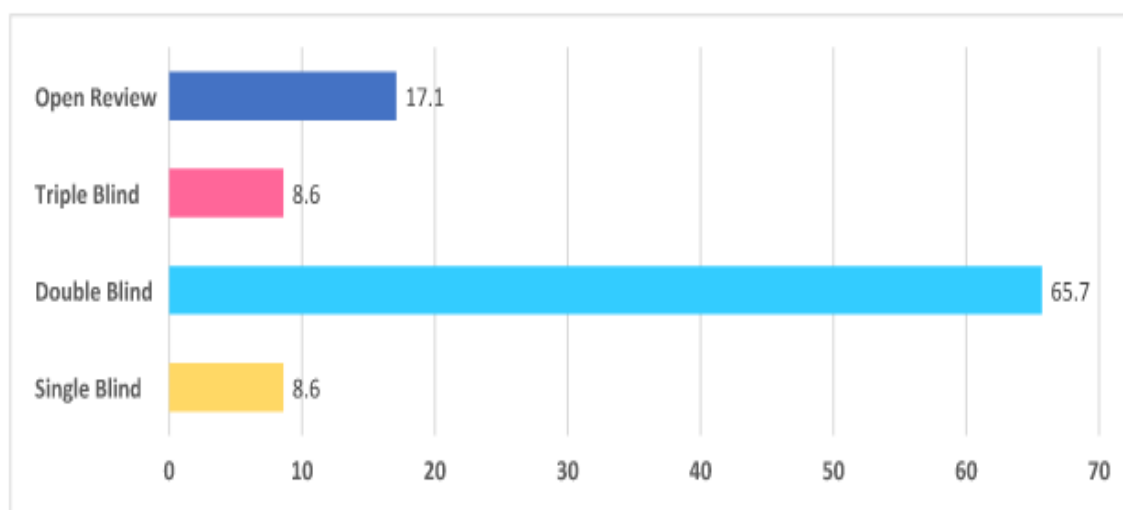


Figure 8. Showing the choice of research scholars on peer review methods

Moreover, each of these review methods has its advantages and disadvantages. In this survey, around 65.7% of doctoral scholars showed that the doubleblind review method seems most suitable. Approximately 17.1% of them articulated that the open review method is pertinent to them. Almost onetwelfth of the scholars recommended the triple-blind review method, and an equal proportion of them endorsed the singleblind review method.

Predominant biases held by reviewers

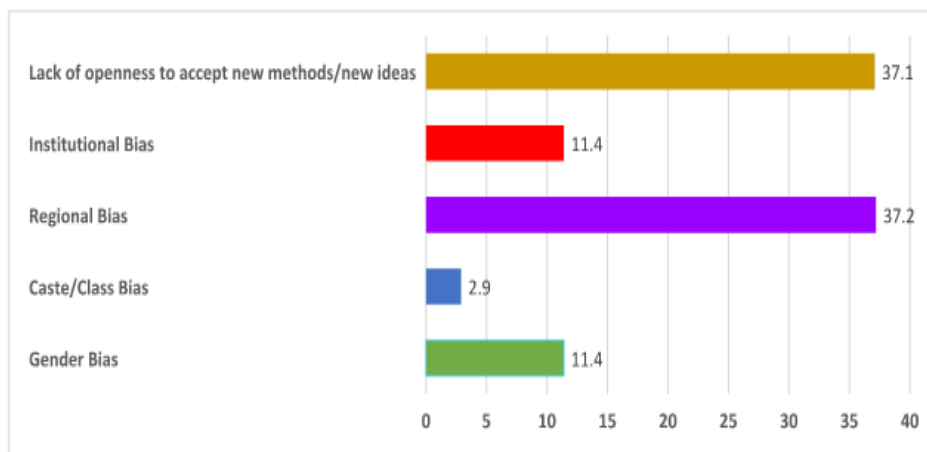


Figure 9. Showing the opinions of scholars on the predominant bias held by reviewers

Although the process of peerreview is anticipated to be carried out objectively and offer an accurate evaluation of the author's work, several preconceived notions impact a reviewer while assessing a manuscript. In this survey, 37.1% of doctoral scholars specified the useful forms of bias the reviewers held: their lack of openness to accept new methods or ideas. Regional bias was designated as a potential source of bias among reviewers by 37.2% of them. Institutional bias and gender bias were chosen by an equivalent proportion of 11.4% of scholars for each form of prejudice. A very meager percentage of scholars mentioned class/caste bias might influence reviewers while evaluating scholarly manuscripts

Scholars' enrolment in Journals

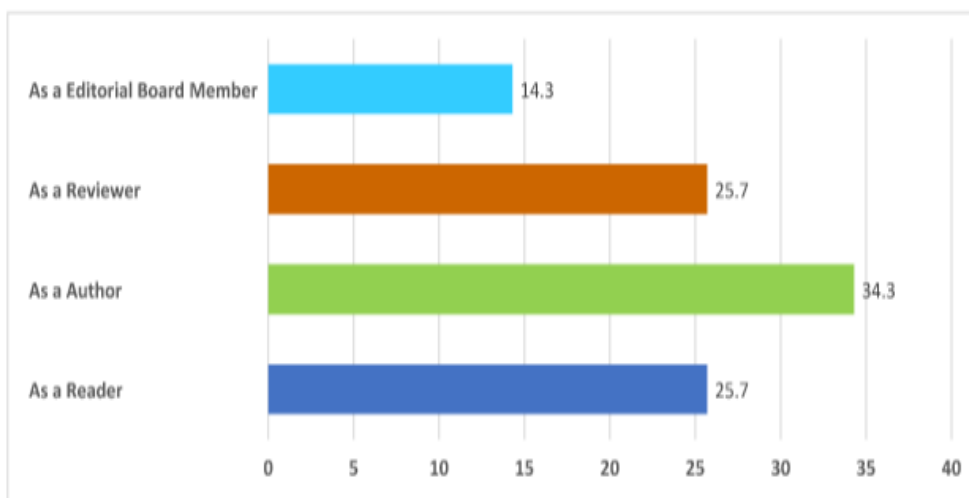


Figure 10. Showing the opinions of scholars' enrolment in journals

With an upsurge in the number of journals, there are more options to obtain access to articles. Yet, subscription to journals offers some benefits based on the role they enroll in the journal. 34.3% of scholars felt that subscribing to journals as an author would provide more services. As a reader, subscribing was considered advantageous by 25.7% of scholars. An equal proportion of them viewed a subscription as a reviewer to offer

more benefits. Registering with a journal as an editorial board member was considered beneficial by 14.3% of scholars.

Methods to select reviewers

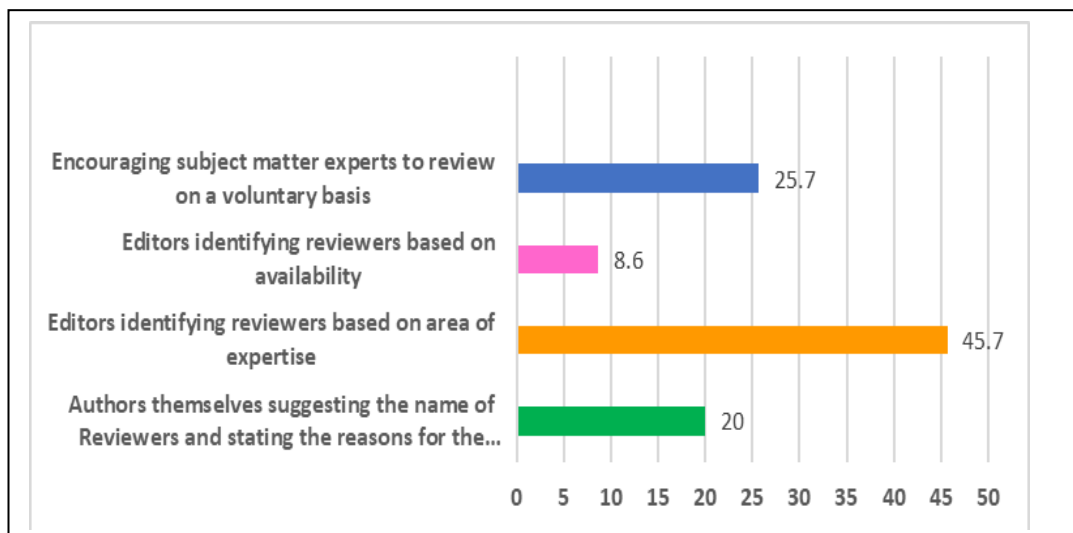


Figure 11.Showing the opinions of scholars on methods to select reviewers

In this survey, scholars were asked to designate their preferred mode to recruit reviewers to review manuscripts. 45.7% of them specified that editors of journals must select the reviewer based on their area of expertise. 25.7% of the scholars' choice was to allow them to review voluntarily. 20% of scholars suggested that authors designate potential reviewers' names appropriate for examining their papers with valid reasons. The least preference was given to editors selecting reviewers based on their availability, which exposed that choosing editors based on their availability should be the last resort of journals.

Irreplaceable roles in journals

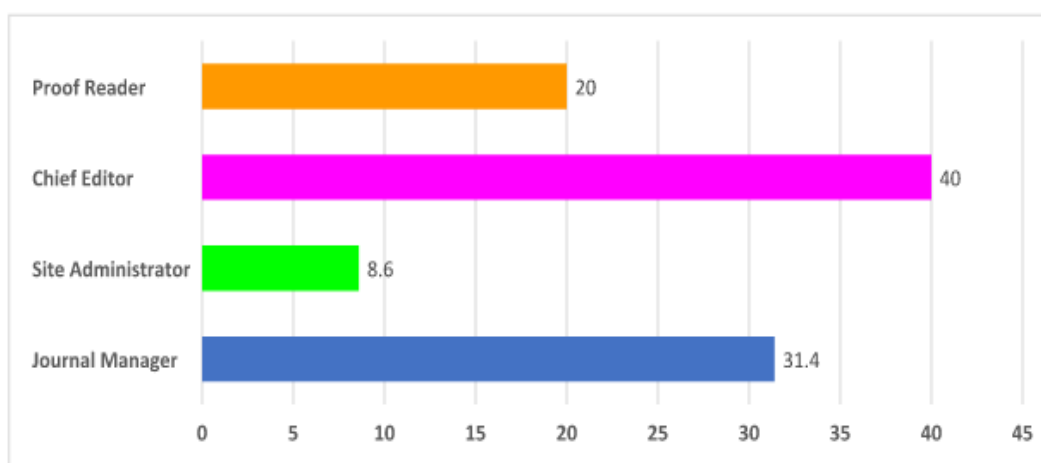


Figure 12.Showing the opinions of scholars on irreplaceable roles in journals

Scholars were asked to stipulate whose role in a journal is irreplaceable, according to them. The chief editor's position was considered most dynamic by 40% of doctoral scholars. The journal managers' part was deemed crucial by 31.4% of scholars, one-fifth of scholars specified that a proofreader's role is indispensable.

Roughly onetwelfth of the doctoral scholars determined that the site administrator's role is significant in a Journal.

Indicators of predatory journals

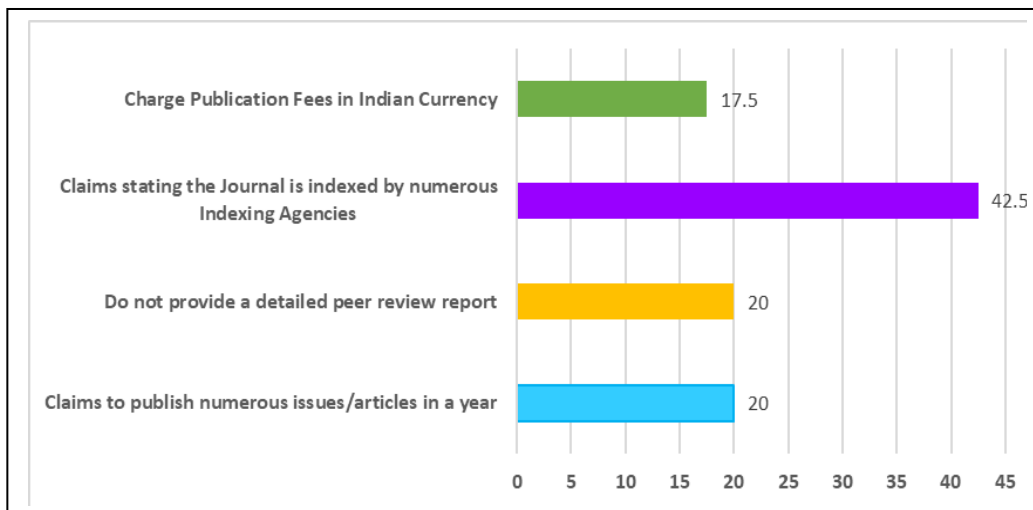


Figure 13. Showing the techniques utilized by scholars to identify predatory journals

Researchers are finding it increasingly difficult to identify authentic journals from fraudulent ones. In this survey, the doctoral scholars were queried on leading indicators that advocate a journal could be a predatory one. 42.5% of scholars detailed that claim stating that journals are being indexed in several indexing agencies could indicate that the journals could be fraudulent. 20% of scholars articulated that when journals claim to publish several articles or issues in a year, it will raise an element of doubt on its authenticity. Besides, 20% of doctoral scholars felt that journals that failed to provide a detailed peer review report could also illustrate that journal could be predatory.

Benefits of open access journals

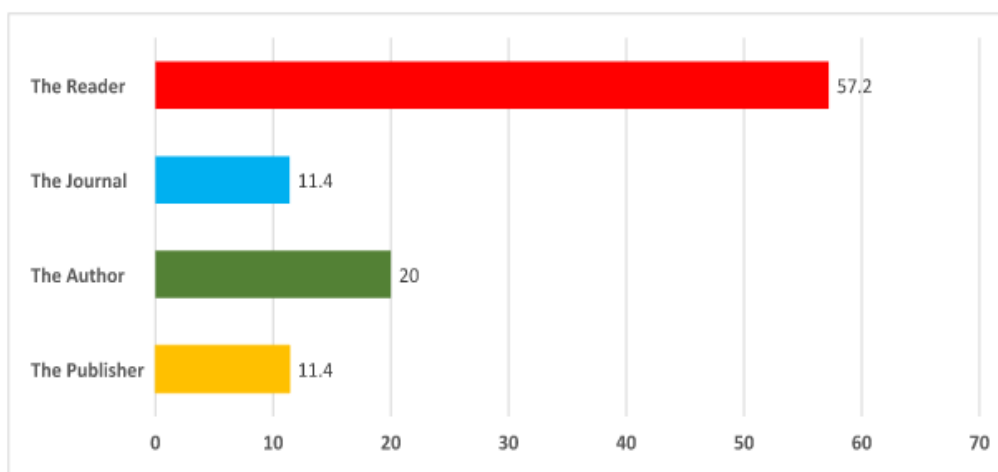


Figure 14. Showing the views of scholars on the benefits of open access journals

In the current survey, about 57.2% of scholars designated that openaccess publication offers more benefits to readers. 20% of the doctoral scholars specified that open access publications would be advantageous

to authors. On similar lines, a study exposed that researcher in the evolving economies and those working under severe conditions could easily access information through open access publications. Additionally, the study revealed that open access could offer many advantages to the general public to understand the problematic aspects of scientific knowledge through free access to information (Arunachalam & Muthu,2011).

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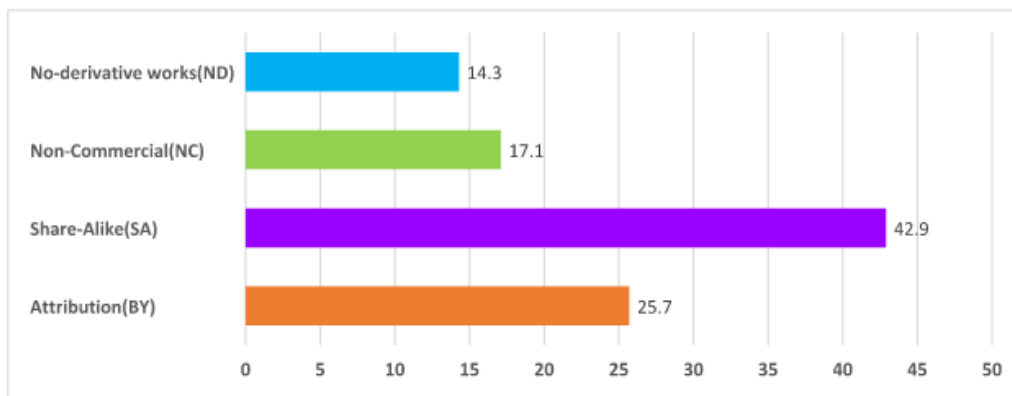


Figure 15.Showing the views of scholars on the benefits of creative commons license

42.9% of scholars designated that the creative commons license of sharealike was considered to offer others a chance to misuse data.25.7% of scholars suggested that attribution provides more probabilities for misusing data. 17.1% specified noncommercial licenses, and 14.3% of scholars recognized noncommercial no derivative licenses to offer more possibilities to misuse data (Creative Commons., n.d).

Sharing data sets with Journals

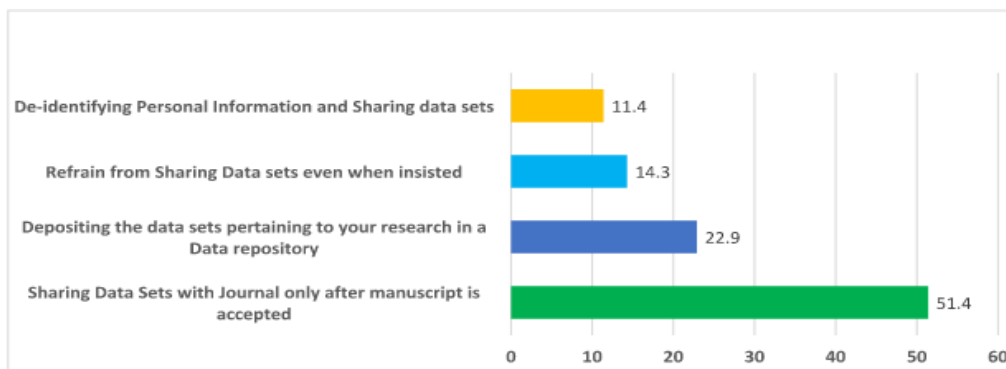


Figure 16.Showing the views of scholars on sharing data sets with Journals

Doctoral scholars who participated in the study had different opinions on sharing data sets.51.4% of scholars showed that they would prefer sharing data with journals only after the manuscript is accepted. 22.9% of them stated that they would favor depositing data in data sets. 14.3% of scholars said that they would not share data sets at any cost.11.4% of scholars designate that they would choose to share data sets after deidentifying information.

Impact of exposure to Research Publication course

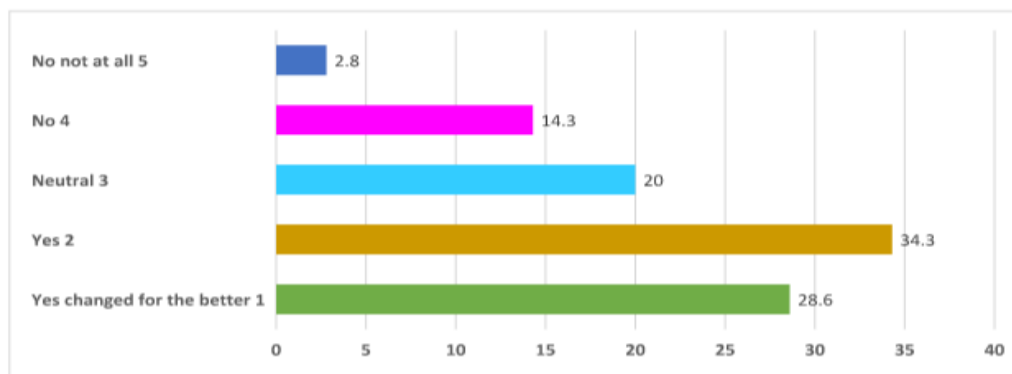


Figure 17. Showing the rating of scholars on the impact of exposure to research publication

By rating on a scale of 1 to 5, scholars designated whether their approach towards research and publication had changed for the better after being acquainted with indexing and reviewing concepts. 34.3% of scholars articulated that orientation to notions on research publication bolstered their research and publication attitude. Only a small proportion of 2.8% of them detailed that exposure to indexing and reviewing ideas did not influence publication and research attitude.

V. DISCUSSION

The preferences of doctoral scholars on fourteen critical concepts related to research publications have been highlighted. Most of the scholars designated that indexing of journals was vital to improve the quality of journals. Besides, they indicated that indexing enhances the accessibility of information and helps in better organization. None of the scholars noted that indexing helps improve the impact factor of journals or accelerated the number of publications. Participants' choices reflected clarity on the indexing parameters, the underlying purpose of indexing, and the indexing agency's services.

The impact factor underlined the frequency of citation of journal articles in journals (Garfield, 1994). Jorge E. Hirsch, a physicist, coined the indexing parameter of the H-index as an instrument for defining theoretical physicists' relative quality. A scientist has index h if h of his/her N_p papers have at least h citations each. The other $(N_p - h)$ documents have no more than h citations each, implying that a scholar with an index of h has published h papers, each of which has been cited in other articles at least h times. Hence, the h -index mirrors the number of publications and the number of citations per paper (Hirsch, 2005). Scholars designated that indexing parameters of impact factor and h -index seemed most appropriate to them.

Desk rejection of manuscripts was a key challenge for scholars. Scholars reflected that a mismatch between the manuscript's goal and scope of the journal was the key determinant that results in the rejection of manuscripts. In the current survey, the lack of novel ideas in research and nonadherence to journal guidelines were specified by substantial scholars. After systematically analyzing the complete document, reviewers determine whether it meets the journal's quality for publication and whether it is within the purview of the top 25% of papers in its field to decide on the implication for publication (Reviewers Information Pack, 2011).

The survey outcome was in line with Stolowy's (2017) study that highlighted the process followed by editors of journals for preliminary screening. The study's findings emphasized that editors consider three norms to make decisions regarding acceptance for review or be desk rejected, 1. Whether the topic fits within the journal's scope? 2. Is the content (literature review, conceptual development, methodology, analysis, conclusions) reasonable (i.e., it does not reflect essential defects or gaps) and suggest a probable influence on the previous research work? 3. Are the format, syntax, and grammar consistent with the journal's policies and expectations? Editors would reject papers failing to meet even two of the above criteria without sending it to reviewers—this process of 'desk rejection' aids in saving the editors' time. The screening process followed during desk review could decide the acceptance percentage of journals. Ware's (2008) survey indicated that the acceptance percentage of journals was 50%, while 20% percent of the manuscripts were rejected preceding the review, and 30% were rejected after peer review.

Scholars' choices on peerreview techniques reflected a clear understanding among them. The typical procedures followed by journals in a peer review process are open review, singleblind review, doubleblind review, and tripleblind review. A singleblind review is a scheme in which the reviewers' identity is masked from the author, but the reviewers are aware of the authors who wrote the manuscript. This review method offers precise authors, organizations, or topographical regions to be treated more or less critically. In a doubleblind review method, both the authors and the reviewers are uninformed of each other's identity (Ware, 2011). In an open peer review system, both authors and reviewers know the identity of each other (Lee et al., 2013). This method increases transparency, reassures reviewers to be valuable in their comments, and could avoid

plagiarism (O'Connor et al.,2017). However, the open review leads to conflicts and retribution between authors and reviewers (De-Coursey,2006).

In the current survey, a substantial proportion of scholars endorsed double blind peer review method. In line with these findings, Schley (2009) revealed that 76% of researchers deliberated the doubleblind peer review technique as suitable. Most scholars considered the double-blind peer review appropriate since it reduces the reviewer's potential bias about nationality or the author's previous work. Furthermore, it allows reviewers to assess manuscripts in terms of quality instead of the authors' reputations. Nevertheless, it is essential to be mindful that it can offer reviewers hints in writing style, subject matter, or self-citation, enabling reviewers to trace the authors (Peer Review,2014).

The openreview method was selected by 17.1% of scholars in the present survey. During the sense about science survey, editors found that completely open reviewing decreases the number of people willing to participate and leads to reviews of little value. Furthermore, the number of scholars who had an open-peer review experience could be trivial, as revealed in a study by publishing a research consortium that 23% of authors had experience with open peer review. Nevertheless, 85% of authors had experience with singleblind peerreview, and 45% had experience with a double-blind review. The single-blind analysis was beneficial as it helped reviewers provide honest feedback without being influenced by the authors' identity. However, there are possibilities for the reviewers to reject manuscripts analogous to their research work to ensure their data is published quickly (Ware,2008).

Besides the frequently used peerreview methods, there is a transformation in peer review and scholarly publishing. As proposed by Eva Amsen, articles are uploaded online, and a post-publication peer review is carried out regardless of the journal's guidelines that accentuate enhancing the materials (Tippmann,2014). Moreover, Keith Collier specified that post-publication peer review is anticipated to become predominant in the future but not in the place of prepublication examination nevertheless in addition to it. A combination of the review process offers assistance in measuring the impact but might not help identify errors and malpractice (Meadows, 2013). However, 82.9% of scholars endorsed the prepublication review during the survey was more beneficial to the researchers. Though post-publication review is slowly gaining momentum, scholars regarded the prepublication review could offer more benefits to researchers,

Peer review is an inevitable part of the publication process. The assessments are carried out by technical specialists with specific knowledge of the manuscript content and researchers with a more wide-ranging knowledge base. Peer reviewers can be anybody with capability and proficiency in the subject areas that fall within the journal's scope. Selecting appropriate reviewers was equally crucial in addition to selecting relevant peer-review techniques to review manuscripts. In the present survey, many scholars designated subject matter experts in the relevant field and asked reviewers to review manuscripts voluntarily.

Reviewers can include upcoming researchers to experienced leaders in the field. However, previous literature highlights that young reviewer are typically the most approachable and provide the finest and valuable reviews, although it might not always be accurate. A study by the publishing research consortium on peer review showed that a reviewer would conduct nearly eight reviews per year (Ware,2008).

One of the researcher's primary intentions would be publishing a scientific paper in a journal earliest before becoming obsolete. Evidence exposes that, according to Keith Collier, repeated peer reviews cost about 15 million hours. Once a manuscript is rejected from one journal, it would be reviewed by other less prestigious journals. Thus, researchers are expected to submit their work to several journals after every rejection until they can identify relevant journals apt for publishing their work, which might take several months or even years (Meadows,2013). To enable scholars, publish manuscripts relatively fast, identifying a relevant publishing company that publishes documents within a short span was necessary. When queried on publishing companies that publish within a brief period, 42.9% of them specified the Elsevier publication company, Taylor & Francis, and Sage Publications followed this.

While reviewing manuscripts, reviewers unconsciously may get influenced by some preconceived notions. In the current survey, scholars designated that lack of openness to new methods and regional biases were more predominant among reviewers. In line with the survey findings, conservatism, or a form of prejudice that disapproves of ground-breaking and pioneering research, has been specified in earlier studies (Braben, 2004; Chubin & Hackett, 1990; Wesseley, 1998). Additionally, qualitative studies are considered as "paradigm-shifting" and "revolutionary," while for research to be viewed as exceptional, the prominence would be on the methodological rigor and robust quality of the study (Luukkonen, 2012). The ambiguity associated with employing innovative approaches, philosophies, and risk of the research not working the way anticipated makes it challenging for novel research to be methodologically intense. Several studies reveal that journals favor authors positioned in the same state as the journal (Daniel, 1993; Ernst & Kienbacher, 1991; Link, 1998).

Still, reviewers point out the linguistic and writing abilities of non-native speakers even if there is nothing inaccurate (Herrera, 1999). STEM (science, technology, education, and medicine) fields (Budden et al., 2008; Wennerås & Wold, 1997), regard that generally, men are favorably treated compared to women in the

peerreview process. Still, the research on gender bias in publication offers conflicting views (Rees, 2011). In the current survey, 11.9% of scholars indicated gender bias among reviewers. A recent metaanalysis shows that gender bias might not be valid (Ceci & Williams, 2011). However, various preferences influence reviewers, the valuable inputs provided by reviewers' aids in enhancing the presentation of the work, clarity in writing and descriptions, discussing relevant literature more elaborately, acknowledging the limitations of the method, and moderating broad or over-reaching conclusions (Voight & Hoogenboom, 2012).

There is enormous growth in the number of academic publishers. Simultaneously, there is an increase in fraudulent 'predatory' journals that lack reputation, truthfulness, and low theoretical ideals. These journals emphasize more on generating money instead of endorsing academic precision. Moreover, the peer review process employed is inefficient or completely absent. They attract the researcher's attention using spam emails, inviting reviewers, and being a part of the editorial boards (Beall, 2012). Jeffrey Beall gave some critical criteria for identifying predatory publishers. One indicator is false claims from the publisher that their content is indexed in legitimate abstracting and indexing agencies that, in reality, do not offer abstracting and indexing amenities. In the current survey, 42.5% of scholars indicated that inaccurate information on indexing and abstracting journal content by reputed indexing agencies was a key identifier for recognizing fraudulent journals.

Additionally, the publishing company owner might be identified as the editor of all the organization's journals published. They may conceal data about author fees by promising authors that the paper would be published and later ask them to pay to publish their manuscript. Moreover, the publisher sends spam requests for peer reviews to scholars unqualified to review submitted manuscripts or assure hasty publication or remarkably rapid peer review (Beall, 2015).

Open access (O.A.) journals are gradually gaining recognition as they help circulate publications worldwide in a relatively short period (Falagas, 2007). Two essential purposes of the research include conducting research and disseminating it to the broader population. Overlypriced journals reduce the accessibility of readers. However, openaccess publications enhance the impact, utility, and productivity of research. Based on this premise, 57.2% of scholars specified open access during the survey was more beneficial to readers.

The Creative Commons is a copyright licensing instrument that enables individuals, companies, and institutions with a simplified, consistent way to grant copyright permissions to their creative work. There are several types of common creative licenses. Attribution license allows others to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation, recommended for maximum data dissemination. AttributionShare-Alike allows others to remix, adapt, build upon your work even for commercial purposes, and license their new creations under identical terms. AttributionNo-derivatives permit others to reuse the work for any purpose, including commercially, but restrains from sharing with others in adapted form. The attribution-noncommercial license allows others to remix, modify, and build upon your work non-commercially after acknowledging them; however, they cannot produce derivative works on the same terms (Creative Commons, n.d). The present survey outcomes revealed 42.9% of scholars considered the attributionshare alike offers more scope to misuse data because the other forms of creative commons licenses place stringent regulations regarding acknowledging and sharing work. Still, the ShareAlike license provides autonomy for potential authors to license their new creation under identical terms.

Over time there is a shift in the data sharing tendencies in research. Editors and publishers of journals insist on sharing data sets during publication to check the authenticity of data. Several initiatives reassure investigators to share their raw datasets to enhance the efficacy and quality of research.

First-order factor analysis on 124 various bibliometric attributes of the data creation articles exposed 15 factors describing authorship, funding, institution, publication, and domain environments. In multivariate regression, authors with previous knowledge on sharing or reusing data or those who published manuscripts in open access journals or in journals that insist on sharing data or conducted studies funded by reputed funding sources were more expected to share their data sets. However, research data sharing levels are still low and steadily increasing. Data is accessible in areas where it can have a considerable influence (Piwowar, 2011). Based on this contention, about 51.4% of scholars who participated in the survey prefer sharing data sets only after their manuscript is accepted, and 14.3% of them are not comfortable sharing data sets even when insisted.

Research as a concept has evolved along with the research culture and standard of academic publishing—however, the fundamental goals and methods of research act as a strong foundation. There is a shift in the perceptions of scholars, enabling them to accommodate novel ideas of publication. The survey results endorse this view as most scholars have designated that their research and publication approach has changed for the better after exposure to the course on research publication. The shift has escalated the expectations of educational institutions from scholars regarding scholarly publication. Consequently, scholars are burdened with accomplishing a specific number and high quality of publications that deviate them from the sole goal of discovering truths and disseminating knowledge for societal benefit.

The shift can be instrumental in bringing constructive outcomes among all research scholars if their motivation and focus are channelized towards equipping themselves with the current academic publishing scenario, fraudulent journals, data sharing tendencies, peer reviews, and journals' indexing. The productive outcomes in publication can assist in widening their knowledge and establish themselves as scholarly authors in due course of time.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The survey on 35 doctoral scholars embraced a considerable proportion of females of 20-30 years. A significant proportion of scholars had completed a postgraduate degree, and about one-fourth of scholars had completed M.Phil. degree before enrolling for the Ph.D. program. The majority of scholars detailed that they did not publish articles in Journals.

Overall, research scholars had an extensive understanding of indexing parameters, review methods, open access publications, and several other notions related to research publication. Scholars uttered the double-blind review method as apposite to examine manuscripts. Correspondingly, they detailed that a prepublication review would be valuable to researchers. They determined that indexing was vital to advance the eminence of journals. Amongst the several indexing parameters, they considered the concepts of impact factor and h-index to be more pertinent.

Additionally, they designated Elsevier as the publishing company that aids in the hasty publication of manuscripts. Scholars felt that they could share data sets with journals after their manuscripts are accepted. Selecting reviewers based on their area of expertise was considered apt by the majority of the scholars. They also articulated that documents were desk rejected predominately due to the discrepancy between the journal's scope and manuscripts' subject. Overall, scholars' overview of research publications' ideas can support building a healthy research culture and expanding their prospects for publications.

Implications

The survey helps the scholars use its findings to apply this knowledge about indexing, peer-review, and journal norms for publication. Scholars' predilections on innumerable ideas about research publications can act as a checklist to other doctoral scholars. The study can also offer scholars sufficient insights on the re-evaluation of these standards while deciding on and submitting manuscripts for publication, which would ultimately empower them to publish in superior journals.

Limitations

The study comprised of a limited sample of Ph.D. scholars only from one university. Thus, the outcomes of the study cannot be illustrative of the wider populace. Further, some participants' replies to the survey required extra probing to recognize the underlying motives for their concepts' predilections. Yet, due to time constraints, the researcher could not conduct follow-up interviews with participants. A significant percentage of scholars had limited or no experience in publishing documents in journals and belonged to the age range of 20-30, which is one of the critical limitations of this study.

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Highlights

- Research Publication is an important aspect of academics, and it is important to share the results with others for the larger benefit of society.
- UGC recommends specific courses on Research Publication to improve the prospects of their publication in reputed journals.
- After introducing doctoral scholars to course papers on Research Publication, scholars develop preferences on indexing concepts, indexing parameters, peer-review, and the publication process of journals.

Data Availability Statement

- The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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