

## **Predatory Publishing and Research Integrity: a Review on Institutional Challenges in Indian Academia**

**Sanghita De<sup>1\*</sup> and Parikshit Mondal<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Department of Library and Information Science, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India

<sup>2</sup> Aeronautical Development Agency, Ministry of Defense, Govt. of India, Bangalore, India

*\*sanghita.cu@gmail.com*

Predatory publishing poses a severe threat to research integrity, particularly in developing academic ecosystems such as India. With the proliferation of journals that exploit the open-access model, offering rapid but low-quality publication options at significant financial cost. The scholarly community faces challenges in ensuring research quality, data privacy, and ethical publication practices. In India, where academic promotions and funding decisions often emphasize publication quantity, these practices have led to the dissemination of substandard research, erosion of trust in scholarly communication, and misallocation of institutional resources. This paper presents a theoretical review that synthesizes key ethical frameworks (deontological, utilitarian, and virtue ethics) to explain the ethical principles that guide academic publishing; conducts a comparative policy analysis of major initiatives (UGC-CARE journal list, GDPR, COPE “Principles of Transparency and Best Practices”); and critically evaluates representative case studies, such as the U.S. FTC’s action against OMICS and Indian institutional responses to identify recurring patterns and gaps. Three principal drivers of predatory publishing emerge; publication pressure, regulatory framework, and limited researcher awareness. Further, less than one in three Indian institutions maintain formal publication-ethics policies. While premier technical institutes demonstrate some examples of good practice (e.g., internal manuscript review), most universities and government laboratories lacked clear sanctions or structured training programs. To safeguard India’s research integrity, it is recommended to establish a real-time journal-verification portal integrating indexing and ethical-code data; embedding mandatory, credit-bearing ethics coursework in graduate curricula; empowering institutional oversight committees with clear enforcement mechanisms; and leveraging AI-driven tools to flag suspect journals. A coordinated national strategy, blending policy reform, researcher education, and technological innovation are essential to stem the tide of predatory publishing and uphold the global credibility of Indian scholarship.

**Keywords:** *Academic institutions; Data privacy; Predatory publishing; Researchers; Research integrity*