

**Proceedings of Webinar
UGC-CARE: INDIAN PERSPECTIVE
(3.07.2021)**

Recommendations made by the Society for Plant Research (VEGETOS) during Webinar dated 3.07.2021 on the topic “UGC-CARE: Indian Perspective” organized by the SOCIETY FOR PLANT RESEARCH (VEGETOS)

Recommendations and suggestions to the National Academy for Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) for improvement of journals in Indian perspective:

Dr. Gyan Singh Sekhawat (Professor, JNVU, Jodhpur) moderated the Webinar with the welcome address by Prof. S.K. Bhatnagar. He extended a warm welcome to the Patrons, EC and Editorial Board members, the Panelists and all the participants from all over the country.

Agenda of the Webinar:

Prof. S K Bhatnagar (Founder & Secretary General, SPR, Editor in Chief, VEGETOS) presented the theme of this webinar.

The UGC approved list of journals was a provision of the UGC, an apex body for all HEIs in India to give recognition to the journals in order to strengthen, encourage and nurture the scientific temper of the Indian researchers. Previous list of such exercises included over 5,000 journals in various fields. However, in due course of time about 88% of the journals found to be of low quality. The revised version of the UGC approved list of journals recognized as UGC–CARE and declared on June 14, 2019 was supposed to be considered for any academic purpose. The commission sent a notice to all universities on 16 September asking them to appoint and promote faculty using the new list as a reference point. Further it was instructed that “Only those who have published their papers in approved journals will be promoted and appointed and if at all some good paper has been published in an unrecognized journal by mistake, it will be reviewed by an expert committee.

According to one analysis, out of 1009 journals (after excluding 327 indexed in Scopus/Web of Science), about 34.5% journals were disqualified under the basic criteria because of incorrect or non-availability of essential information such as address, website details and names of editors. Another 52.3% of them provided false information such as incorrect ISSN (International Standard Serial Number, meant to identify a serial publication), false claims about impact factor, claimed indexing in dubious indexing databases or had poor credentials of editors, the paper published in journal **Current Science** stated.

In order to address and discuss these points so as to strengthen the existing system of enlisting journals of various disciplines, a webinar was organized under the aegis of **Society for Plant Research (VEGETOS)** which is probably the first of this kind.

The organizers selected a **panel of 10 eminent, scholarly and distinguishing scientists** across India, who had a common interest in determining the basic criteria needed to understand and improve the status of Indian journals so that the scientists in India and abroad recognize and authenticate the UGC-CARE listed journals on priority owing to the assured high quality publications.

Prof. K.S. Rao (Professor, DU and Managing Editor, VEGETOS) apprised the panelists and participants with the topic of discussion by Starting his talk with the brief introduction to the UGC-CARE, Prof. Rao touched upon the UGC-CARE list journals Group-I and Group-II, its need and its web links & authentication using power point presentation. With the details, Panel discussion started for the ranking of these short-listed journals which was thought provoking and interesting.

Prof R R Hanchinal (President, SPR) in his Presidential address, congratulated the team of SPR (Vegetos) for timely initiative on the UGC-CARE listed journals in order to improve the Indian journals, their rating and to get them recognized at international platform. He emphasized that the Society for Plant Research (VEGETOS) will make a concept document including the recommendations of today's webinar to be sent to the UGC authorities. It will help the UGC and NAAS to work together for establishing the Indian periodicals globally.

Recommendations / Suggestions:

Panelists : Prof Ichha Purak; Prof Abhay Kumar Pandey; Prof K Muthuchelian; Prof Ved Pal Singh; Prof K S Rao; Prof S L Kothari; Prof Ashish Bhatnagar; Prof Anushree Lokur; Prof Pawan Kumar Dadheech, Prof S S Bargali; Prof Jayashree Rout and Dr Mamta Kapila (special Invitee, Springer Nature)

Proceeding Record: Dr Deepika Abrol and Dr Vrinda Thaker.

Following points were raised to give recommendations for the improvement of the quality of Indian journals and to establish them globally.

1. Panel discussion began with the suggestion that the UGC, being a primary regulatory body and umbrella organization for HEIs in India should **screen standard journals on the basis of various parameter** to be designed after **considering jointly the national scenario and the available foreign database**. UGC Committee need to **discourage and remove the sub-standard, predatory, quick publishing journals** after monitoring them through a subject expert committee.

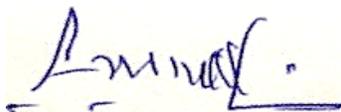
2. Universities are facing acute problem while screening the appropriate candidate on the basis of publication because the huge mass where all Indian journals (standard and sub-standard) compete with each other equally on one platform without any discrimination between them on the basis of merit. It was strongly felt that substandard journals should be demoted from UGC and voted for the ranking process of listed good quality Indian journals.
3. Besides rating the journals, it was also suggested that the individual performance of a candidate in terms of research citation, H-index etc. should also be taken into account. Good quality manuscripts based on potential research, either basic or applied reflect on the status of a journal and therefore qualitative analysis along with some quantitative parameters like past history of the journal, its global reputation etc. should be promoted by CARE especially for the Indian journals.
4. Citing Nature issue on Science in India, it was stated that the research has no boundaries. Its impact is global so the publication by Indians in Indian journals is not a limitation but by enhancing the quality matrix of Indian journals, we need to attract foreign researchers to publish their work and especially good review articles in our journals on priority. It was emphasized that proper emphasis be given to the quality of reviewing process by the reviewers and their contribution should be duly recognized by the Editorial Board of the journal and the UGC. It will be instrumental in improving the quality of Indian journals.
5. It was mentioned that there are Universal Impact Factor (UIF), Global Impact Factor (GIF) and Bogus Site Factor ?!!. It was suggested that personal metrics is more important and UGC should develop software to assess it. Some technical problems are also highlighted by giving an example of those journals which are removed from the CARE list but were earlier in the UGC approved list, etc. Further, the reviewer's contribution in the process should be encouraged and motivated in the selection criteria of the candidates for higher levels.
6. An accountability of the research be fixed as most of the researches are funded by the public money. Technology transfer and patents are needed for the promotion. Likewise the repetition of the data for multiplying publications in different journals should be demoralized and quality research should be promoted so that the administrators selecting a faculty should have clear vision.
7. Through publication, research can be kept alive and it not only represents academic performance of an individual or a group of researchers but of Institution and Nation as well. Publishing research in journals of National and international repute is one of the globally accepted indicators used in ranking of Institutions, award of research degree and also in promotion schemes of a researcher. UGC- CARE is involved in identification, preparation, continuous monitoring and maintaining Reference list of reputed journals in all disciplines which is helping in matching global standards of high quality journals. Availability of Indian research journals of high quality at one platform is helping researchers to publish

their work in quality journals and every steps should be taken to **Support, Promote and Motivate the good quality Indian journals.**

8. It is a fact that the **quality research makes a quality journal.** Basic requirement of the publications for promotions, award of degree and career advancement is one of the causes for **degradation in standard of research.** Many persons rush towards acquiring more and more publications and sometimes they are trapped by the predatory, fictitious journals.
9. **Dr. Kapila Mamta** (Executive Editor, Life Science Journals, Springer Nature) gave a brief account of Springer Journals, highly appreciated efforts of SPR and team Vegetos for such webinar. She pointed out that **Vegetos is one of the prestigious journal of Springer Nature because of the high standards of research publications and ethics being maintained by the team Vegetos.** She concluded the webinar by focusing on various points raised by the panelists and concluded that the **quality of published research papers is a multitasking exercise which is calculated by quality consolidation of research data, presentation, outcome, quality of reviewing, merit of the publishing journal, citation index and the overall impact of publication on the scientific world.**
10. Journal can increase its visibility by enhancing the range of **memberships, attracting young researchers** across the university, agricultural and traditional as well. **Organizing webinars, seminars, conferences** with compulsory membership would be helpful in it.

Prof. M P Yadav (Founder Patron, SPR) emphasized on the **job of good reviewers and quality research work.** The common conclusion can be drawn by **preferring Quality over Quantity.** This includes **journal rank among the group of journals and research & researcher by the matrix.** The problems and factors affecting these processes include the **submission of good quality research in foreign journals instead Indian, discouraging response of the reviewers, time constraints in getting review reports etc. for the journal.** At the same time, API score, promotion and APC for the researchers remain the priorities. **The publication credit is like a coin: On one side are the good manuscript and research, more citations and matrix whereas on the other side are good impact factor, good reviewers, H-index and Journal circulation.** Thus researcher and journal are complementary to each other.

Dr. Ved Pal Singh (Professor, Delhi University, President, North Zone, SPR) extended Vote of thanks to all scientists, panelists, moderator, recorders, technical team of SPR and Vegetos and all associated members.



R R Hanchinal

President

SOCIETY FOR PLANT RESEARCH



S K Bhatnagar

Founder & Secretary General

SOCIETY FOR PLANT RESEARCH

Date : July 19, 2021