

RESEARCH & PUBLICATION ETHICS

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The word "ethics" is rendered in a 3D, light-brown wooden block font. The letters are thick and have a slightly distressed, natural wood grain texture. They are arranged in a single row and cast a soft shadow on the surface below them, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The word is centered within a white rectangular area that has a thin, light gray border.

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Research and Publication Ethics

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Author's Acknowledgement: The writing of a Textbook always involves creation of a huge debt towards innumerable author's and publications. We owe our gratitude to all of them. We acknowledge our indebtedness in extensive footnotes throughout the book. If, for any reason, any acknowledgement has been left out we beg to be excused. We assure to carry

Preface

In the contemporary developing world, there is a rapid increase in unethical practices in almost all spheres of life. Unethical practices in research and publication, however, can be prevented not just for the benefit of the research participants but also for all the people involved in the research process. The book, hence, focusses on giving insights on the concept of ethics, various kinds of unethical behaviour- fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, misrepresentation of data, salami slicing, redundant and duplicate publication, undisclosed conflict of interests, etc, their causes and the best practices that can be followed to prevent unethical behaviour and misconduct in research and publication.

The course on Research and Publication Ethics has been mandated by University Grants Commission (UGC) and holds two credits for Ph.D. students, aiming to raise awareness among researchers regarding ethical practices and prevention of research misconduct at any point of conducting the research. The course is well structured to include the most important aspects of the topics in a systematic and well-organised manner. The curriculum of the course includes the following:

- (i) Philosophy and Ethics: The concept of philosophy, definition, nature, scope, branches, moral philosophy, moral judgements and reactions.
- (ii) Scientific Conduct: Ethics with respect to science and research, intellectual honesty and research integrity, scientific misconducts: falsification, fabrication and plagiarism, redundant publications: duplicate and overlapping publications, salami slicing, selective reporting and misrepresentation of data.
- (iii) Publication Ethics: definition, introduction and importance, Best practices/standard setting initiatives and guidelines: COPE, WAME, *etc.*, Conflict of Interest, Publication misconduct: definition, concept, problems that lead to unethical behaviour and vice versa, types, Violation of publication ethics, complaints and

appeals, Identification of publication misconduct, complaints and appeals, Predatory publication and journals.

- (iv) Open Access Publishing: Open access publication and initiatives, SHERPA/RoMEO Online resource to check publisher copyright & self-archiving policies, Software tool to identify predatory publications developed by SPPU, Journal finder/journal suggestion tool viz. JANE, Elsevier Journal Finder, Springer Journal Suggestion, *etc.*
- (v) Publication Misconduct: Group Discussions (Subject specific ethical issues, FFP, authorship, Conflicts of interest, Complaints and appeals: examples and fraud from India and abroad) and Software Tools (Use of plagiarism software like Turnitin, Urkund and other open source software tools).
- (vi) Databases and Research Metrics: Databases (Indexing databases, Citation databases: Web of Science, Scopus, *etc.*), Research Metrics (Impact Factor of journal as per Journal Citation Report, SNIP, SJR, IPP, Cite Score, Metrics: h- Index, i10 index, altmetrics).

It is evident from the curriculum that it doesn't apply to any specific discipline of study and hence can be applied to research and publication in any field of study. Therefore, Ph.D. students across varied disciplines can make use of the textbook as part of their Research and Publication Ethics course. The textbook can also serve as a one-stop solution for all the topics covered in this curriculum and students will not need to refer to different sources for different topics. The book also makes sure to provide the most relevant and authentic information, in the most simplified way possible. The use of graphics, images and tables has made the content more comprehensive for students.

The overall aim of the textbook is to impart education and awareness among Ph.D. students regarding ethical and best practices in research and publication and to ease them in their process of writing and publishing their research article by providing sources and links for various journals and platforms required at different steps of research. Since every new study yields new findings that are published and made public, research and publishing ethics are tightly related. Any study's participants are safeguarded from direct damage by ensuring research is performed ethically. Researchers nowadays are required to exhibit research integrity and excellent research practises. In recent years, publishing ethics and research ethics have been studied together. And hence, this textbook ensures a comprehensive space for understanding the most ethical and smooth conduct of research.

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About the Book

This book is for the UGC-approved course on research and publication ethics as a prerequisite course for Ph.D. students. The key areas covered in the book are as follows:

- Introduction to the concept of philosophy and ethics in relation to research
- The history and evolution of ethics in research for a better understanding of the importance of ethics in research.
- Ethical principles researchers must follow and abide by at every stage of research, beginning from the planning stage to the data analysis and writing and publication stage.
- The various regulatory bodies and the guidelines set by them to be followed by researchers.
- The unethical practices in research and its implications for all the personnel involved in the research process
- The best practices in research and publication given by the Committee of Publication Ethics
- The concept of Open Access in Publishing, its advantages and the various sources for Open Access Journals.
- Predatory Publishing as a detrimental practice for research and publication.
- Ways to manage and deal with research misconduct, complaints and appeals in case of misconduct, explained well with the help of case studies.
- Various journal finder/suggestion tools, their features and applications in the process of publication.
- The concept of indexing and metrics in research, their calculation and application.
- The importance of databases in research, their source and features, for the researchers to choose the most suitable database for their study.

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