

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-51886

Date: 28-05-2025

**Title: Balancing Control and Autonomy: A Three-Tiered Policy Framework for Strengthening Academic Publishing in India**

### Recommendation:

**Accept as it is.....YES.....**

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		√		
Techn. Quality		√		
Clarity		√		
Significance			√	

**Reviewer's Name:** Shafiya Akhter

**Reviewer's Decision about Paper:** Recommended for Publication.

**Comments** (*Use additional pages, if required*)

### Reviewer's Comment / Report

#### Abstract Review:

The abstract provides a clear overview of the UGC-CARE initiative and its significance in maintaining academic publishing standards in India. It highlights the system's strengths in filtering out predatory journals and promoting reputable publications while also identifying existing operational challenges. The transition to a new model and the rationale for retaining and reforming the current system are introduced with clarity. The proposed three-tiered framework is presented as a balanced solution, combining national oversight with local autonomy. The abstract successfully conveys the paper's objective and proposed contributions in a concise and structured manner.

#### Keywords Review:

The keywords are relevant and succinct. They reflect the major themes of the paper, such as academic reliability, indexing, and policy frameworks. These keywords will assist in accurately indexing the paper in academic databases and enhance its discoverability by interested readers.

#### Introduction Review:

The introduction provides a detailed contextual background on the importance of academic publishing integrity in India. It outlines the purpose and function of the UGC-CARE List and acknowledges its central role in improving the quality of scholarly publications. The text identifies the UGC's goal to

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mitigate unethical publishing while promoting excellence. The discussion of partial success (75%) offers a nuanced perspective, acknowledging the list's positive impact while noting room for enhancement. The introduction effectively sets up the rationale for exploring alternative or complementary models to the current system.

### **Content and Thematic Clarity:**

The paper strikes a balance between regulatory oversight and academic freedom. It identifies a systemic issue in scholarly publishing governance and offers a solution-oriented analysis. The proposal of a three-tiered model reflects a structured and pragmatic approach to addressing centralized limitations while incorporating international standards and decentralized autonomy. The text is logically organized and clearly written, allowing readers to easily follow the argument.

### **Relevance and Originality:**

The topic is timely and highly relevant to the evolving academic landscape in India. The proposed model contributes original thinking to the policy discourse surrounding academic publishing. The paper situates itself within an ongoing institutional debate, offering constructive perspectives rooted in practical realities.

### **Overall Assessment:**

This paper presents a thoughtful examination of academic publishing regulation in India, especially within the framework of the UGC-CARE List. It evaluates existing structures, reflects on their impact, and proposes a feasible and balanced alternative. The arguments are well-supported, and the tone is analytical yet constructive. The content is both policy-relevant and academically rigorous.