Contribution of controversies or difference of opinion to scientific advancement

It's my pleasure and delight to present the first issue of Journal of Contradictory Research in Science (JCRSCI) to our global audience. Right through our basic education we are thought to follow written statements, so our minds are fundamentally tuned to follow. Occasionally some minds lack the necessary skills to follow and dare to take the alternative paths and many of them make big in life by becoming visionaries. In the scientific research profession as well several researchers experience outside the box events which puts them in crossroads of publication, wherein after failing to publish it a few journals it's written off. Nevertheless research findings which don't fall into the classical views in any research area at a given point of time, gets buried in the vast pool of unpublished data and never surfaces to public domain. As most research work is funded by taxpayers, the public has the fundamental right to know the outcome of research work funded by them. Although this is in general the outline of open/free access publication, which increasingly many journals are adopting nevertheless considerable number of scientific findings remain unpublished due to controversial nature of the results, differing opinions, lack of political mandate and many more. JCRSCI would like to provide a platform to bring all such scientific publications to public domain with the only aim of knowing the scientific truth and in the process promote innovations and divergent thinking in science. To achieve this we will adopt a new peer-review system which will involve very open and bi-directional communication between the authors and reviewers via the editors to avoid any issue of bias and emphasise openness in its true sense.

Scientific controversies is not new and is neither unexpected. Since scientists are not an inbred species, there is a significant element of divergent thinking and opinions, which often leads to varying views on any subject. There are several examples from the scientific history to support this. Recently a controversial research work on the mammalian transmission of avian influenza virus (H5N1) was published in Nature despite the initial attempts by several review panels to block its publication. This episode raises a very important question on whether pursuit of knowing scientific truth should be skewed by very biased decisions or decision makers. How will it be possible to eradicate the element of bias in scientific publications? We believe a very open access review and publication system will be fundamental in this process. It is interesting to note that the British government has recently initiated actions to make research information more easily accessible, very much supporting the open access policy. It's time for the entire scientific publishers to join and add voice to such initiatives at a global platform, which will eventually be economical and beneficial in the long run. Such a socially responsible initiative is currently necessary to bring major changes in scientific publishing.

The incidence of avian flu research mentioned above is not an isolated case; there are several other research findings, which are of controversial nature. To mention a few, the issue of mobile phones and its health risk (recently endorsed by WHO), nuclear energy, safety of Nano-medicine, environmental contamination, benefits/harmful effects antioxidant therapies, stem cell research and many more. In our future issue we will be focusing on the fundamental issue responsible for raise of these scientific controversies and the necessary steps to understand unbiased scientific truth. It is evident that in the pursuit of luxury and comfort the human species have evolved to perform in a business-like approach forgetting our social and environmental responsibilities which can seriously compromise not only our current health issues but as well of our future generations to come. Hence it is timely to act now and learn from the scientific controversies to support socially responsible scientific advancement. After all what good is the scientific breakthrough which is more harmful to the society in the short or long term? Is the eureka factor the only essence of scientific research?

Highlighting some of the controversial scientific topics, in the current issue we have an article on mass fish mortalities, which are often associated with environmental pollution. Contradicting this, systematic research conducted

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found it to be associated with faults in the nets used for fishing. Which although may seem unusual, nevertheless may have major implication in the administrative decision made to control such untoward incidences. In similar lines we also have articles related to naked singularities in space-time curvature, role of curcumin in immunoproliferative assays and herpes related myopericarditis, which although a bit off the track from the current thinking, may have major implications to scientific advancement.We have also included an introductory article written by Dr IE Cock, which highlights the Aims and scope of JCRSCI and further details are also available at www.jcrsci.org.

I believe our initiative will motivate you to think divergently and encourage you to publish your research findings with controversial results or as I would like to refer them as results with differing opinions.

Sincerely

Arun HS Kumar