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Publication has been, still is, and will continue to be a big business in education and academia.

Facing great challenges from electronic publications such as the cheap or free e-books and e-journals, the traditional publishing market has undergone sweeping changes over the last decade. During this transition phase of the evolution, however, some harmonic synchrony between the publication enterprises and the academia have gradually drifted away, causing increasing concerns from academic communities.

Some publishers understand the market well—products can be easily sold to at least a few thousand libraries worldwide at relatively high prices with relatively low costs by asking the authors to provide camera-ready books and articles in PDF format, given that most authors know how to use *LaTeX* and *Word* software. Legitimate productions notwithstanding, in producing fast-and-cheap books and journals a few publishers seem to have forgotten about some fundamental academic standards and principles.

It has been noticed, not just as a single incident, that a novice researcher receives an invitation from a publisher to chief-edit a new academic journal without going through serious and careful peer reviews. With a naive impulse, this academic newcomer immediately agrees and then quickly teams up with some senior researchers and “big names” in the field to form an editorial board, which becomes successful especially when those seniors are nice enough to simply reply a Yes back to the e-mail invitation from this unknown, presumably “a leading expert” in the field, as they were accustomed to in the traditional practices of their old times. Some journals were born this way as a publisher-editor win-win happy-ending fairytale.

It is also not uncommon these days that an inexperienced researcher such as a recent PhD graduate receives an invitation from a publisher to chief-edit a new book or a new book series. Hesitant to lose a golden opportunity, this young beginner accepts the invitation right away but then turns around to invite a couple of senior experts in the field to be his/her co-

editors. Through them, further invitations are extended to other good researchers to contribute chapters to the book or volumes to the series. In some cases, knowing that handbooks and encyclopedias must almost surely be collected by most if not all libraries, a smart new editor puts several overview and survey articles as well as technical papers together and names the edited volume “Handbook of...” or “Encyclopedia of...” for the publisher as a nice return. The only problem is on the reader’s side: an old-fashioned professional perusing such a ‘handbook’ or ‘encyclopedia’ to search for some basics would simply be left with hopeless disappointment.

Occasionally, a new PhD or even a new MS graduate receives an e-mail from a publisher saying that they found his/her thesis from the library and believe it is worth being published as a book after some minor editing work by the publishing company. Such a surprising and seductive offer can hardly be resisted by this young student so as a result a new book arrives at the market after just a few months, unlike the old generation of serious and responsible scientists who spent several years or longer to contribute a profound and nearly-error-free technical book to the academic communities.

Another way of having more profitable sales, other than increasing the size of a journal to raise its selling price to the libraries, is to fast-increase the IF (Impact Factor) of an existing SCI (Science Citation Index) academic journal aiming to attract more submissions and larger readerships. Knowing the means of SCI-IF is not only important for marketing but also is so for academics, and being aware of the exact formula for calculating the IF used by Thomson Reuters, some managing and technical editors even demand that authors cite irrelevant references from their journals or from the editors’ own publications, implying that they would not further consider the authors’ well-reviewed submissions otherwise. We have witnessed that some journals had an unreasonably high jump of IF and some editors received an unbelievable high rise of personal citation numbers within just a very short period of time.

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What's more and worse yet, other laughable stories include that a nonsensical "academic paper" artificially generated from a so-called SCIfgen computer program written by some MIT students was accepted to a professional conference in 2005, and similarly two totally meaningless papers prepared by someone with fake name "Herbert Schlangemann" were accepted by a couple of computer science conferences in 2008 and 2009, respectively. Apart from mismanagement, this is likely because conference registrations and proceedings publications bring in real profits.

All in all, many things seem to have become market-driven today, education and academia being merely

two of them. Needless to say, the world is rapidly evolving and developing. Likewise, the publishing business needs to survive and grow. Understandably, many things need to be changed, have been changed recently, and perhaps should in the future be changed from the way it is now. But even so, shouldn't the many well-proven fundamental ethical principles that support the academic qualities and standards be carefully preserved?

