

The frosted glass ceiling of academic publication: Reflections on publishing in penury

JOSYULA K LAKSHMI

The glorious world of plentiful, widely cited, high-impact publications is an achievable goal for some, but a mirage, or at least a none-too-easy dream to realise, for many. This poem presents some thoughts and trajectories on the latter — the aspiring and yet-to-be-successful majority.

The warning bells are pealing,
Your fate OA* journals are sealing.
The APCs* send you reeling,
While your funded peers are wheeling,
For waivers you are kneeling,
For discounts brokenly appealing.
With what you are dealing,
Is publishing's frosted glass ceiling.

At writing you perspire away,
Cleverly (you're sure) trying to parlay.
The free reviews you do for OA,
Your own paper's APC to defray.

If you don't have crackling cash to pay,
Will you ever get to play your song your way?
Will the darkness be pierced with the ray
Of what your study and you have to say?

In the shallows you wallow,
Your CV more or less fallow,
You reap as your funds sow,
Non-open isn't much less of a woe.
A tough today may not bring a bright tomorrow,
Thickish skin you must grow, as many lines you toe.
But there's no denying YOLO*,
So, back to the keyboard to type-oh!

***Note:** OA = open access; APCs = article processing charges; CV = curriculum vitae; YOLO = you only live once.

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Author: **Josyula K Lakshmi**, (jklakshmiiph@gmail.com), The George Institute for Global Health - India, Punjagutta, Hyderabad - 500 082, Telangana, INDIA.

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