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Are Journals That Charge a Fee a Challenge to Upgrade?

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According to 2021 data, there are 120 medical faculties in Turkey. The necessity of associate professors and professors in these faculties for medical education is an undeniable fact. However, since medical faculties do not have sufficient teaching staff, they are selected with different criteria in developed countries. Universities in developed countries are divided into research and education-oriented universities and candidates apply to universities under these criteria. In order to be promoted to the title of associate professor in Turkey, it is necessary to fulfill the criteria defined by the Council of Higher Education according to the Inter-University Board (IUB) criteria. The appointment of a professor is made according to the principles determined by the medical faculty to which the application is made. Uniformity is tried to be ensured by determining the criteria for promotion to the associate professor degree by a single center and the characteristics of the candidate's articles are among the necessary conditions in the first priority. The main assignment criteria are to have research articles in international and national journals. In our country, the first priority in the publication of articles is SCI journals, followed by non-SCI journals. Until recently, articles published in all journals were accepted for associate professorship applications, while journals that demanded a fee for article publication were accepted as dubious journals by the Inter-University Board. It was thought that the publication of an article by paying money affected the academic independence of the article. However, while many SCI-indexed journals require a fee for publishing the article, the restrictions of IUB caused the journal to be included in the dubious journal group despite its high impact score. In this case, the criteria for deciding whether the journals are dubious or not came to the fore at what stage of the evaluation of the article the journal asked for a fee. At this stage, the question that came to mind was what criteria would be used to decide whether the journals were dubious or not. The answer to this question was at what stage in the evaluation process of the article journal asked for a fee. Journals charge a fee for evaluation as soon as the article is submitted or when the article is found suitable for printing by the editor. Some journals state that they want the fee for open access publication. It is confused whether the printing fee is requested for the publication of the article or for open access. In this case, for whatever reason, IUB did not find it appropriate to pay the fee for the publication of the article for the upgrade. However, with this regulation, academics who published their works in such journals during the 5-10 year preparation period were wrong and they were asked to choose journals according to the new regulation. Due to the situation that caused the academician grievance, a restructuring was made in 2022. This time, within the scope of SCI-Expanded, Q1, Q2 and Q3 journals were deemed sufficient to upgrade regardless of whether they were paid or not.

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I hope that the new conditions for associate professorship candidates will set a new horizon as they serve full-time at their institution, get promoted and publish their commendable works in accepted journals.