

Some Review Journals Do Not Allow Students to Author Reviews: Is this Ethical?

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Review papers are written to give a professional history and perspectives of a particular field of interest. There are different policies to accept review articles. Some journals do the usual process for review papers for research articles. For such journals, authors do not need to have an invitation. However, for other journals, the authors are invited by the editor, or they send a proposal to the journal. If the editor accepted their proposal, they would send their review paper. Some of the journals that publish just review papers with high impact factors have special conditions to accept review papers. For example, the journal does not accept submissions in which students are co-authors, or in which students or postdocs are first authors. It is well known that most of the famous professors are usually busy and hence do not have enough time to collect data and information, plot figures and write the paper alone. So, they naturally get help from students to complete the review paper. However, with the established condition by the journal in which the students cannot be an author, the professor has to remove the name of their student(s). This practice is in our opinion unethical. Although, we accept that experienced authors should write review papers, students should be able to be a co-author if they have made some contributions. Instead of this, these journals could ask that the corresponding authors should be the famous and experienced professor so that he/she accepts all of the responsibilities of the paper.

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