

Serious thoughts about plagiarism from India

I am writing this invited editorial to share a few serious thoughts about plagiarism. I read the editorial entitled *Caveat lector*, which came in April–June 2012 issue of *Saudi Journal of Anaesthesia*.^[1] I really appreciate the efforts taken by the Editorial Board to tackle plagiarism at the grassroot level. I have published my experience regarding plagiarism reporting in April 2012 issue of *Saudi Dental Journal*.^[2] I am briefly explaining my experience regarding plagiarism. I had reported a case of pemphigus vulgaris in oral cavity in May–Aug 2007 issue of *Saudi Dental Journal*.^[3] The article was plagiarized by Indian authors and they published the same article in July–Sept 2010 issue of *Journal of Indian Society of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry*.^[4] The authors copied the entire text (introduction, case report, discussion, conclusion, photomicrograph Figure 4, and direct immunofluorescence photograph) from the original article. They changed the department and presented the case as if it occurred in a pediatric patient. But unfortunately, even after reporting to the editor of *Journal of Indian Society of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry*, the article's abstract is still available in (pubmed) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21157054> and (Medknow publishers' web page of *Journal of Indian Society of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry*) <http://www.jisppd.com/article.asp?issn=0970-4388;year=2010;volume=28;issue=3;spage=200;epage=202;aulast=Anand>, and the full text is still available in MEDIND (India's largest medical database containing research articles published in Indian medical journals) <http://medind.nic.in/jao/t10/i3/jaot10i3p200.htm>.

The following protocol should be adhered to by the authors to report plagiarism in the published articles.^[5] The authors should inform the editor of a journal where a plagiarized article is published. Both original and plagiarized articles should be produced in hard and soft copy, with the plagiarized part highlighted. The author should also ask the editor to form a disciplinary committee to investigate the case of plagiarism. If the evidence of plagiarism is convincing, the editor should refer the case to the chief editor and other staff members with a request to arrange

a disciplinary meeting. The editor of the journal where the plagiarized article is published should communicate with the editor of the journal containing the original article to rectify the matter. The allegedly plagiarized article has to be temporarily retracted from publication and a notice should be published in the journal. The plagiarist should provide an explanation. In case of non-response in the stipulated time or an unsatisfactory explanation, the article should be permanently retracted, and the author blacklisted and debarred for submitting an article to a particular journal for at least 5 years. The concerned head of the institution and head of the department of the author's institute have to be notified. Even though there are setbacks from the higher authorities, it is the prime duty of the author and the editor to take strong decisions to tackle plagiarism at the earliest to avoid unethical publishing.^[5]

1. Pubmed
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21157054> last accessed September 9, 2012
2. Medknow publishers' web page of the journal
<http://www.jisppd.com/article.asp?issn=09704388;year=2010;volume=28;issue=3;spage=200;epage=202;aulast=Anand> last accessed September 9, 2012
3. MEDIND (India's largest medical database containing research articles published in Indian medical journals)
<http://medind.nic.in/jao/t10/i3/jaot10i3p200.htm> last accessed September 9, 2012.

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2. Shamim T. Plagiarism reporting: My experience. *Saudi Dent J* 2012;24:119.
3. Shamim T, Varghese VI, Shameena PM, Sudha S. Pemphigus vulgaris in oral cavity: A case report. *Saudi Dent J* 2007;19:115-8.
4. Anand R, Jaiswal JN, Samadi F. Oral pemphigus vulgaris in a pediatric patient. *J Indian Soc Pedod Prev Dent* 2010; 28:200-2.
5. Shamim T. The latest developments in plagiarism detection in medical literature. *Eur Sci Editing* 2012;38:56.

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