Plagiarism Detection

Editorial

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Recently during the screening process of submitted manuscripts, one of the editorial board members detected a suspected plagiarism case. In this case, Google search enabled the detection of the plagiarized manuscripts. The title, abstract, materials and methods, and even tables were almost the same. According to the privacy rules of the Korean Academy of Family Medicine, the first and corresponding authors were asked to submit an explanatory statement for the plagiarized manuscripts. The authors responded that a mistake was made due to the uploading of a wrong file. The board of directors of the Korean Academy of Family Medicine decided to give a minor penalty to the corresponding author (a warning letter) and the plagiarized manuscript was rejected.

Plagiarism can be defined as 'both the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work...Substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work means the unattributed verbatim or nearly verbatim copying of sentences and paragraphs which materially mislead the ordinary reader regarding the contributions of the author.'¹⁾ Without a doubt, plagiarism one of the most serious, and most widely recognized forms of research misconduct.

Plagiarism detection software enables systematic detection and prevention of plagiarism. CrossCheck (<http://www.crossref.org/crosscheck/index.html>), a unique web-service for detecting plagiarism in scientific publications, is an excellent service for detecting plagiarism, which detected almost all plagiarized manuscripts. eTBLAST (<http://etest.vbi.vt.edu/etblast3/>), a text-similarity based search engine, is also very useful resource.²⁾ Identifying plagiarism using the Google search engine is also possible.³⁾ In our case, a member of the editorial board found plagiarism using the Google search engine.

Plagiarism detection software has considerably affected the quality of scientific publishing. Such a notion was successfully performed by The Croatian Medical Journal. The plagiarism

detection procedure consisted of automatic scanning of manuscripts using plagiarism detection software (eTBLAST and CrossCheck) and manual verification of manuscripts suspected of having been plagiarized (more than 10% text similarity).²⁾ They found that 11% of manuscripts were plagiarized, 8% were true plagiarism, and 3% were self-plagiarism.⁴⁾

The Korean Journal of family medicine (KJFM) has also faced the risk of publication of plagiarized manuscripts. In KJFM, a few plagiarized manuscripts were found, mostly by chance. KJFM must seriously consider the introduction of a process to detect plagiarized manuscripts in a systematic way.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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