



Response to Horrom TA. The perils of copy and paste: Plagiarism in scientific publishing. J Rehabil Res Dev. 2012;49(8):vii–xii.

Dear Editor:

The recent article on plagiarism in scientific publishing is very interesting [1]. Many attempts to prevent plagiarism are described, and those activities can help upgrade the standards of the journal. However, some additional concerns should be mentioned. First, the screening to detect plagiarism is very useful for the journal in preventing plagiarism. However, the problems of the present tool should be mentioned. The system usually tracks on verbatim textual copying. Limitations can be expected in cases of figure plagiarism. Several cases of figure plagiarism, use of others' pictures without modification or with only a few modifications and without proper citation, can be seen and cannot be detected by simple plagiarism screening tools. Second, the management of self-plagiarism or duplication as described in the article is very interesting and it seems to be a compromised way. However, it should be noted by any authors who want to submit to a journal that self-plagiarism is still a kind of plagiarism and should be avoided.

REFERENCES

1. Horrom TA. The perils of copy and paste: Plagiarism in scientific publishing. *J Rehabil Res Dev.* 2012;49(8):vii–xii.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1682/JRRD.2012.09.0165>

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RESPONSE

Thank you for your response to the recent editorial on plagiarism. I agree that it is important to note that our system for detecting plagiarism is not perfect. While we do our best to find all instances of plagiarism before publication, tools that check only the text of a document have their limits. Because of these limitations, it is imperative that editorial staff and researchers work together both to limit plagiarism and to educate other scientists and professionals on this important issue.

Dr. Wiwanitkit also makes a very good point about figure plagiarism.

Our current plagiarism-detection tool does not check figures, but figure duplication is a real concern. Just as with text, figures and images that have appeared in print or online previously must be properly cited, even if they appeared in an article by the same authors. Additionally, many publishers require authors to acquire permission before images may be duplicated. To address this figure duplication, the *JRRD* editorial staff will begin asking authors to verify that figures are original or have been properly cited before we publish articles.

JRRD is working to educate researchers on this important topic. It is important for all involved to recognize that with the growth of digital publishing and the ever-increasing interconnectivity of the world, the paradigm of plagiarism has shifted. As new technology makes plagiarism easier with the advent of copy and paste and digital media, so too do our tools for monitoring plagiarism improve. Also, while self-plagiarism may not have been considered as serious as plagiarism of others in the past, our definition of what constitutes plagiarism has expanded as publishing expands into the digital realm.

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