

Editor's note

Recent instances of author misconduct in *Pramana*

The exploding nature of the amount of available scientific information indeed makes it a very demanding job for referees and editors to catch possible cases of plagiarism. While many cases are discovered during the refereeing process, some do slip through it. We are sorry that this has happened for *Pramana* in a few cases, in spite of the vigilance by referees and editors. In continuation of the Editorial discussing general *Pramana* policy on plagiarism, we would also like to comment on a few cases of scientific misconduct on the part of the authors that *Pramana* has had to deal with in the past few months.

Pramana did not escape being involved in the much discussed case of 65 papers withdrawn by the arXiv administrators (Cornell University) citing excessive overlap with materials published by others or the authors themselves. Two papers published in *Pramana* (Vol. 67, No. 2, pp. 239–247, August 2006; Vol. 68, No. 1, pp. 21–30, January 2007), were included in this list. *Pramana*'s own investigation, carried out with the help of Editorial Board Members concluded that 1. "...does not strictly qualify to be plagiarism for nothing is lifted verbatim, but it is certainly not also the case of the authors being unaware of the results ...". 2. ... copied summary of discussion in parts – also acknowledged by authors. Looks like a case of minor plagiarism ...". Since we consider this as a form of plagiarism, we have asked the authors to publish an erratum in which appropriate references to the published material are cited when the discussion has had an overwhelming overlap with it.

In the second case (*Pramana*, Vol. 68, No. 6, pp. 995–999, June 2007; Vol. 69, No. 2, pp. 285–300, August 2007) we were alerted to overwhelming similarities with published material, by one of the authors of the plagiarized material. *Pramana* conducted its own investigation and confirmed 1. "...only the title, authors and acknowledgement are different but the whole text is plagiarized from - -'s paper ...", 2. Clear case of plagiarism.

The competent authorities at the University (Dean, School of Physics, University of Malaysia) of the authors were informed, whereupon we found the disturbing news that the concerned authors were not members of the Institute they were claiming to be. These papers have been withdrawn by *Pramana* since then.

We have also uncovered instances where authors have submitted to *Pramana* a manuscript containing a part of the results presented in another manuscript submitted to another journal, prior to the submission to *Pramana*. This case of self-plagiarization was discovered already before publication, thanks to the vigilance of referees.

We would like to once again stress that *Pramana* takes a very serious view of such acts of plagiarism and indeed is bound to follow the steps laid out in the Editorial.

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Editor

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