

Statement on Plagiarism

The scientific research and publishing communities the world over are by now well aware that over the past two or three decades, instances of scientific misconduct seem to be on the rise. The major forms of scientific misconduct are captured by three words: 'fabrication', 'falsification' and 'plagiarism'. Their meanings are self-evident. Several editorials have appeared in different journals in the recent years and at least two international conferences have been held on this issue, which seriously affects both the conduct of science and the public perception of science. We are concerned here particularly with plagiarism, which has become easier thanks to the growth of the Internet and easy access to vast amounts of written material.

One dictionary defines plagiarism as "the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work". The degree of plagiarism could be as 'mild' as just the stealing of a single sentence from another author without acknowledgement, or could involve much more extensive 'lifting of material'. John Ziman has emphasized that the three forms of misconduct mentioned above are equally serious and reprehensible: "plagiarism is as infamous as fabrication in a scientific paper".

The Indian Academy of Sciences takes a very serious view of all forms of scientific misconduct and of plagiarism in particular, as they directly affect the integrity of the scientific process. Such behaviour is definitely unacceptable, deserving exposure and an appropriate level of penalty. An article containing plagiarized material, in case it is inadvertently published, steals credit from the original source and also erodes confidence in the quality and reliability of our journals.

To counter these problems, we are instituting several measures with immediate effect uniformly for all Academy journals. Every case of suspected plagiarism brought to our attention will be investigated objectively and transparently by the journal editors as speedily as possible. Specialized software capable of detecting plagiarism will be installed and exploited. If plagiarism is detected during the refereeing process, apart from immediate rejection, the Academy will consider



other steps commensurate with the seriousness of the case. In those situations where plagiarism is detected after publication, appropriate announcements both online and in the next earliest print issue of the journal will be placed. The Academy reserves the right to bring such instances to the attention of the author's employers and also to inform the original author (where applicable) whose work was plagiarized and the source from where the plagiarized material has been taken.

We join our readers and contributors in hoping that the vigilance and care exercised by our referees and editors will minimize this problem.

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