

# Why Journals Need Help from Interviewers to Stop Redundant Publications

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There was a time when publishing a scholar's work was solely to spread knowledge. In modern times, a lot is at stake and publishing an article is conjoint with many other aspects. The need for publications for the purpose of professional benefits (promotion to a higher rank) is well-known, in India and many other countries [1]. What intrigues us at JCDR is the rise in duplicate publications and the forced ones that are submitted just few days before the scheduled interview.

This editorial is about how an interviewer can play a significant role in impeding an academic misconduct in the form of redundant publication [2]. It is not uncommon for a journal editor to receive a mail attached to an article, wherein the author requests for an expedited service because of an upcoming interview for academic promotion. Due to lack of time or a desire to conduct a research, the author submits an already published article. In some other cases, the author simultaneously submits one article in multiple journals. The process/communication goes on concurrently. The journal that publishes faster is finally enlisted in the updated resume. At this stage, some authors retract the yet-to-be-published article, citing some vague reason while some carry on thinking that the 'number' of publication will increase and strengthen their resume. Deceits like this happen because the guidelines for academic promotions are looming large. Also that, at an interview setting, the chances of redundant articles of getting skimmed (and the author penalised) is very less. This is where, we think, that an interviewer can be slightly more vigilant. The demand for articles, just at the time of interview, is so high that to meet the demand, articles are 'made up'. This is similar to the demand-supply policy of economics that holds true in the medical journalism field too.

At the interview, if the in-charge requests for 'all' the publications of an interviewee rather than the recent ones that were published 'after' his last elevation to the present position, the articles that were published more than once, will become detectable. Usually, a specialist in the particular field is made to hold the chair of an

interviewer. So, even a subtle or more cosmetic change in title and/or content of two articles will become apparent.

Of course, a journal (should) possess tools or have a policy to scan literature to find similar articles or previous publications of same author. However, the role of a journal and its investigative policies are limited and there are chances that the article will move ahead and get published (once more). At JCDR, we run an article through, plagiarism check at the time of submission and repeat it on acceptance. And further once if the time of acceptance to actual publication is delayed more than one month. The catch is, if this pathway from submission to publication is short enough, the article will pass through since the plagiarism software/tool will not be able to flag it [3]. We have experienced that such duplicate or redundant works, though small in number, are submitted at a regular frequency. If these are weeded at later stages, it frustrates all editorial efforts thus invested in the improvement of the manuscript, not with standing the waste of precious peer review resources.

There might be instances where duplicate articles were caught at interview tables and right penalty adjudged to defaulters, but such reports are not made public or notified. What is prudent is, such happenings should be publicised (may be, keeping the name of the defaulter anonymous) so that one would think twice and hesitate before duplicating a previously published article.

Through this editorial we would like to raise this concern and welcome opinions on the topic. In cases, where a journal misses to weed out a duplicate article, the role of second sieve can be taken up by the interviewer.

## REFERENCES

- [1] The Gazette of India (<https://old.mciindia.org/Rules-and-Regulation/Gazette%20Notifications%20-%20Amendments/TEQ-01.11.2018.pdf>)
- [2] (<https://publicationethics.org/category/keywords/redundant-publication>) Assessed on 29.04.2019.
- [3] Jain H, Das S, Garg A. Google versus other text similarity tools in detection of plagiarism: a pilot study in the Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research. *European Science Editing* 2016;42(4) 87-90.

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