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[Editorial Review]

Strengthening Publication Ethics for KODISA Journals: Learning from the Cases of Plagiarism

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Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to review, analyze, and learn from the most recent cases of plagiarism and to identify and promote ethical practices in research and publication.

Research design, data, and methodology - This is a case study, an analytical approach, which focuses on analyzing the most recent cases of plagiarism to identify ethical issues and concerns in journal publication practices.

Results - Despite the availability of many software and web-based applications and programs to detect plagiarism, there is no universal or perfect plagiarism detection application available to ease the editorial responsibility. Lack of understanding the concept and ignorance of plagiarism were the main reasons for the cases of plagiarism.

Conclusions - Some of the plagiarism cases reveal a lack of knowledge in proper application of in-text citations and refer-

ences, including quoting, requiring, paraphrasing, and citing sources, etc. Furthermore, the need for recognizing and considering the distorted and falsified primary and secondary research data as plagiarism is essential to enhance ethical practices in journal publication.

Keywords: Publication Ethics, Plagiarism, KODISA Journals, JDS.

JEL Classifications: E00, G00, H00, M00.

1. Introduction

In June of 2014, Journal of Distribution Science, one of the Korean Distribution Science Association (KODISA) journals, developed plagiarism detection guidelines, "KODISA Research Ethics and Plagiarism Detection Procedure of Global Journal Publication Guidelines". The procedure and guidelines were necessary not only to promote ethical research practices but also to prevent and avoid possible plagiarism in cases where plagiarism is identified as unintentional but careless and ignorant. In general, detection of plagiarism occurs during the article evaluation process of ascertaining whether the research, creativeness, organization, and completeness are formatted according to the submission and ethical guidelines. In cases of carelessness and unintentional plagiarism, editors or evaluators notify and request authors to revise and resubmit the paper for further evaluation. However, the association permanently removes authors from membership, rejects submission, and includes on the list of plagiarized authors if plagiarism is identified as intentional and deliberate. In terms of duplicate, multiple, and redundant publications, the editorial office of KODISA notifies both the authors and the prior published journals and either rejects the submission or removes the published paper even if the republication is identified after the publication.

This study, focusing only on those articles which have completed the submission and evaluation process but are being identified as 'plagiarized' and excluding the articles that have

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failed to meet the publication standard, examines the effects of the journal's ethical publication guidelines.

2. Cases of Plagiarism, KODISA Journals

2.1. Case 1

In 2014, an international researcher submitted a research paper entitled, "A Study of Job Stress on Job Satisfaction among University Staff in Pakistan and Their Concomitant Aftermaths: Empirical Study," to be evaluated for the possible publication in *International Journal of Industry Distribution and Business* (IJIDB). During the evaluation process, the editorial office identified this paper as having been published in *European Journal of Developing Country Studies*, Vol. 1. pp. 13-22, in 2006. The article was submitted without any revision or modification. The association informed the author and rejected the paper stating, "Authors must do everything to avoid plagiarism, including copying and submitting previously published articles. This paper is rejected due to the similar contents of other paper," and included this author's name on the association's blacklist.

2.2. Case 2

In the first half of 2014, an international researcher submitted a research paper, "New Clothing Adoption in Islamic Market," to be evaluated for the possible publication in *Journal of Distribution Science* (JDS). The editorial office found that a majority of this paper was copied from an existing article: pages 2 to 13 were identical to the existing article that was available on the internet. This author only added data analysis and conclusions to the existing research paper. The editorial office also determined that many articles with similar subject existed on the internet. The association notified the author and rejected the paper, stating, "Your paper is rejected due to identical contents, especially pages 2 to 13, of an existing paper found on the internet".

2.3. Case 3

An international researcher submitted a paper titled, "Management Education in India and Future Trends," during the first half of 2014 to be evaluated for the possible publication in *Journal of Distribution Science* (JDS). The editorial office identified that this paper copied some of the contents of an existing paper's literature review, research method, and conclusions. If the possible plagiarism issue was limited to literature review, the editorial office would have informed the author to revise his paper because some researchers do include exactly the same previous literature review without recognizing the possible plagiarism. However, the office had to reject the paper without asking for revision because this paper plagiarized beyond the section of literature review:

<Your paper is rejected due to the following contents that are included in your paper without any references, and these identical contents are included in the previously published paper:

1) Management education had its beginning in the US in 1881 with the donation of one hundred thousand dollars by Joseph Wharton for the establishment of America's first school of finance and commerce in the University of Pennsylvania...

2) In contrast to the expansion and development of business education in the US and more recently in Europe, Japanese business schools graduate no more than 200 MBAs each year...

3) A question that is now vigorously debated at a number of management institutions is whether we need two years for a good MBA program...>

2.4. Case 4

Another international researcher submitted an article, "Women Entrepreneurs Problems in Andhra Pradesh Capital," in the first half of 2014 to be evaluated for the possible publication in *Journal of Distribution Science* (JDS). The editorial office checked some of the sentences in the paper through google and found them to be identical to those existing papers on the internet. More significantly, the office also found the previously published papers to be plagiarized because all of the contents in these papers were identical with no references at all. The association notified the author and rejected the paper: "Your paper is rejected due to identical contents of existing papers used in your paper without any references, e.g., Women entrepreneurs face a series of problems right from the beginning till the enterprise functions.~ They are considered as helpers. The attitude of society towards her and constraints in which she has to live and work are not very conducive. There are umpteen problems faced by women at various stages beginning from their initial commencement of enterprise, in running their enterprise....."

2.5. Case 5

An international researcher submitted a paper titled, "The Impact of Vendor Development in Supply Chain Management on Firm Performance," in the first half of 2014 to be evaluated for the possible publication in *Journal of Distribution Science* (JDS). The editorial office suspected this paper due to its textbook-like title and identified this paper as having been plagiarized from the following research paper, "Seetharaman, A., Khatibi, A. A., & Wu, S. T.(2004). Vendor development and control: its linkage with demand chain. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, 34(3/4), 269-285." The editorial office notified the author and rejected paper.

2.6. Case 6

In the second half of 2014, an international researcher submitted a paper entitled, "Theorizing Length of Relationship as Moderator of Key Account Management Performance- Repeat

Order," to be evaluated for the possible publication in *Journal of Distribution Science* (JDS). This case was similar to the above case, Case 5: This paper included a textbook type of research topic, and the editorial office found this paper to be plagiarized from a previously published article as well. The content of this paper was somewhat different from the existing articles, but the paper clearly plagiarized the hypotheses, research method without conducting an empirical analysis, and findings. The editorial office also found that there were many similar articles available on the internet. The association notified the author and rejected paper, stating, "Your paper is rejected due to similar contents of the following paper used in your paper without any references, Noor, N. A. M., & Ahmmed, K.(2013). Key Account Management Strategy in Business-to-Business Relationship: A Proposed Research Framework. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, 2(1), 70-77."

2.7. Case 7

An international researcher submitted a paper, "A Considerable issue to Performance Improvement," in the first half of 2014 to be evaluated for the possible publication in *Journal of Distribution Science* (JDS). The editorial office notified and rejected this paper: "Your paper is rejected due to the existing paper that is identical to your paper, Beheshtifar, M.(2013). Organizational optimism: A Considerable issue to success. *Journal of Social Issues & Humanities*, 1(6), 23-32, and we are reminding you that copying someone's article is same as stealing someone's intellectual property which is a crime and our association will not tolerate this type of behavior

2.8. Case 8

An anonymous domestic author asked KODISA to evaluate his paper, and the editorial office found that the majority of the contents, including research model and hypotheses of this paper, were same as the previously published paper in Korea. The association notified this author and rejected the paper: "Your paper is rejected due to the issue of plagiarism: your paper plagiarized the existing paper which includes the following contents that deem to be identical to your contents: 1) Contents of paper 'A' is same as those of 1 page (introduction) to purpose of page 12 of paper 'B' 2) Ethical management of page 2 of paper 'A' is same as that of paper 'B' of page 15; 3) Ethical management and business outcome of 3 page of paper 'A' are same as those of paper 'B' from page 20 4) Ethical management and job satisfaction of page 3 of paper 'A' are same as those of paper 'B' from page 24; 5) Ethical management and turnover intention of page 4 of paper 'A' are same as those of paper 'B' from page 26; 6) Research contents and methods of paper 'A' of page 5 are same as those of paper B of page 31 and thereafter 7) Both papers have same research model and hypotheses 8) Paper 'A' has plagiarized paper 'B' as it is. So, we do not inspect and publish paper 'A'."

2.9. Case 9

An anonymous domestic researcher asked KODISA to evaluate his paper. During the evaluation process, the editorial office found this paper to have plagiarized from one of the existing papers, but the office also found that the paper that this author was copying from also plagiarized from another previously published paper. The association notified the author, "Your paper is rejected due to the plagiarism issue. Your paper includes same contents of two existing papers that we have identified: 1) This paper has same research background of the existing paper, first and second paragraphs, page 10 2) The paper has same contents, theoretical background and concept of ethical management, of other paper, page 14 3) Description of corporate image at page 4 of the paper is same as those of page 39 of the existing paper; 4) Research model and hypotheses of page 7 of the paper are same as those of page 49 of the existing paper."

3. Sanctions against Violating Publication Ethics

Many journals were excluded from the SCOPUS database because these journals deliberately ignored their own publication ethics to make money, e.g., bypassing the peer review process and publishing those articles from the academic conferences that were not presented. The real problem is that these excluded journals from the SCOPUS database knowingly hide the fact of exclusion for a period of time to continue to make money by collecting the publication fees from researchers. KODISA believes that the Ministry of Education and National Research Foundation of Korea should intervene and penalize these unethical behaviors, and these journals should be permanently excluded from the research community.

4. Conclusions

In general, copying and pasting contents from other's or their own published articles without properly citing or using references are considered plagiarism. The plagiarism policy of KODISA is to notify and provide an opportunity for the authors to respond and defend their plagiarism cases only when the case deems to be an unintentional mistake. The association acknowledges that many plagiarism software and internet programs are not universal or perfect in detecting every plagiarism case. Therefore, the association focuses heavily on paying special attention to articles during the evaluation process and physically verifies cases of plagiarism. Some researchers perceive using some contents from their own published articles and applying same literature reviews from existing articles without properly citing references are acceptable practices. They believe a research paper is not plagiarized when its research method, data analysis, findings, and discussion are different from their previously published

papers. The definition of plagiarism specifically states a researcher must cite every source even if she uses the contents from her own published paper.

The publication ethics of KODISA and responsibility of reviewing editors make it almost impossible for plagiarized papers to be published in its journals. The reviewers are encouraged to report any plagiarism cases during the article evaluation process, and they are commended for reporting these incidents. KODISA does not tolerate plagiarism, and the association will use necessary steps to penalize those plagiarizing authors regardless of who they are. For instance, the association announced summary cases of duplicate publications in their website in December of 2013:

<Please find attached cases of violation of research ethics. This case, "Duplicate Publication," is a clear violation of research ethics of KODISA. The association immediately took the following actions to penalize authors and papers in accordance with KODISA Research Ethics Article 11, and this case will be closed as of December 31st in Korean standard time.>

Article 11 (Punishment for Violation of Research Ethics)

② KODISA shall remove published paper, announce this incident through the website(www.kodisajournals.org), and notify the author's organization as well as National Research Foundation of Korea after indexing.

③ A violating member will be expelled from KODISA for three years and not be published in any KODISA journals, and the association shall announce this incident through the website (www.kodisajournals.org).

④ KODISA shall keep a violated thesis for 5 years immediately after the closure of the case.

⑤ KODISA shall stop the publication process and withdraw the research paper without notifying the author if the result of investigation suggests a violation of research ethics. Any other resolution regarding the case of violation of research ethics shall be discussed, approved and carried out by the research ethics committee.

KODISA is fortunate in having many experts from different academic disciplines who are able to detect these plagiarism cases. Experience has shown that some journals that do not

have a diversity of reviewers who are experts in different areas of study have difficulty in detecting plagiarism, and some journals do not have guidelines for processing and penalizing plagiarism cases. Consequently, some reviewers intentionally overlook possible plagiarized articles because their editorial office does not even know what to do with the reported plagiarism cases. With clear guidelines and penalty for the cases of plagiarism and strategically developed publication ethics, KODISA and its journals are not only setting a good and ethical example but also leading and guiding other journals to promote publication and ethics in research.

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