Plagiarism - Google vs Others: A Pilot Study

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Introduction

Softwares have been launched to curb and check the menace of 'Plagiarism'. The journal editorial used iThenticate for plagiarism check, but after few misses, we re-evaluated our strategy. Then we started using Google by manually running sentences in the database. This study is an analysis of the change in practise. For completion of the study we considered eight sofwares, ran a feasibility test and found that only four were easily assessible and viable. We compared iThenticate, Plagiarism Checker X and Viper. Google was considered the standard in this study.

The authors do not endorse or refute any commercial brand and there exists no conflict of interest in the study.

Methodology

The final scoring was done by adding up the scores of each section. Thus, all 1s reflect the comparison between Google and other three softwares, and the addition of all 1s and 2s reflect the comparison among the three softwares.
* Each report was manually checked and 'percentage' of plagiarism was not considered.

Each section was scored as :
No significant plagiarism- 0
Significant plagiarism, same as Google - 1
Significant plagiarism, less than Google - 2
* Google was considered the standard.

A Twenty five articles (09 case reports and 16 original articles) were selected where decision was greatly effected due to plagiarism.

B These manuscripts were re-checked for plagiarism, searching each sentence, in Google database. These articles were run through the three plagiarism softwares.

C The following sections were analyzed-
In case report : case details & discussion.
In original research: methodology, result & discussion.

D **E**

Result

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

	Methodology n (scores)	Result n (scores)	Discussion	Total score
Google	13 (1s)	11 (1s)	11 (1s)	35
iThenticate	12 (1s)	10 (1s) 1 (2s)	5 (1s) 4 (2s)	34 35 (1s+2s)
Viper	6(1s) 2 (2s)	6 (1s) 1 (2s)	4 (1s) 4 (2s)	18 22 (1s+2s)
Plagiarism Checker X	11 (1s) 1 (2s)	10 (1s)	5 (1s) 4 (2s)	26 31(1s+2s)

Maximum score, [16 X 3] = 48; where 16 is the total number of original articles and 3 is the section in each article

Considering all 1s — Google > iThenticate > Plagiarism checker X > Viper

Considering 1s + 2s — iThenticate > Plagiarism checker X > Viper

CASE REPORTS

	Case details n (scores)	Discussion n (scores)	Total score
Google	4 (1s)	9 (1s)	13
iThenticate	3 (1s) 1 (2s)	5 (1s) 4 (2s)	8 13 (1s+2s)
Viper	2 (1s) 1 (2s)	4 (1s) 4 (2s)	6 11(1s+2s)
Plagiarism Checker X	3 (1s) 1 (2s)	3 (1s) 6 (2s)	6 13(1s+2s)

Maximum score, [9X 2] = 18; where 9 is the total number of case reports and 2 is the number section in each article

Considering all 1s — Google > iThenticate > Plagiarism checker X = Viper

Considering 1s + 2s — iThenticate = Plagiarism checker X > Viper

Google > iThenticate > Plagiarism checker X > Viper

Other Findings

Google checks images, figures and tables, but the other three softwares do not. Considering Google as the standard the database updation of Plagiarism Checker X was found to be better then the others; the average time difference can extend upto months. This can be an important factor when a journal processess an article within a small time period and checks for plagiarism only once.

Discussion

Using Google to check plagiarism is time intensive, although the results are better. Based on the study results, we now use Google with Plagiarism Checker X.
We recommend using two tools for plagiarism check and at two different timelines. Though, whatever results are obtained, it should always be evaluated by an editor rather than relying on the 'percentage of plagiarism'.