

RETRACTED ARTICLE
A SHORT NOTE ON MARGINAL ANALYSIS OF A
TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM
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1 Introduction

Plagiarism is a plague that any scientific publication in any discipline should fight and eradicate all over the world. Unfortunately, if, on the one hand, the powerful search engines available on the web have helped referees to identify most of the cases, the increasing number of publications have on the other hand facilitated that dubious practice and the number of cases have increased. The case we are facing today in our journal is a severe one as the "authors" are multi-recidivists who have been identified in former plagiarized papers since 2007. M. Sreenivas and T. Srinivas have this time succeeded in obtaining the publication of a plagiarized paper in the last issue of the RAIRO journal, but their fraud has been identified very quickly by different colleagues. We will briefly recall below the history of former cases involving these two persons and expose the proofs of plagiarism about the current paper which justify its retraction from the records of the journal.

2 A history of frauds

At least four papers co-authored by Sreenivas and Srinivas have been revealed in the last two years and a report about this investigation has been published on the web page of SIAM (<http://www.siam.org/journals/plagiary/index.php>). The method was nearly always the same as these papers contained entire paragraphs and abstracts copied almost verbatim from preprints or old papers in the field (the Transportation area). We will only resume one of these facts which is particularly instructive: as mentioned in the SIAM report, the paper: M. Sreenivas and T. Srinivas, The transportation: more-for-less criterion, *International Journal of Statistics and Management System*, v. 3, n. 1–2, pp. 152–165, 2008 is indeed plagiarized from S. Storøy: The transportation paradox revisited, posted to *Optimization Online* September 2007. Surprisingly, the same authors have submitted the same paper in parallel to the 4OR journal in October 2007, but it was discovered to be plagiarized and was not published. The editors of that journal published an editorial in the first number of the 2009 volume (D. Bouyssou, S. Martello, F. Plastria, Plagiarism again: Sreenivas and Srinivas, and an update on Marcu, 4OR vol. 7, n°1, 2009, pp. 17–20) with a transcription of the exchange mail between them and the authors where the latter did express some weak regrets without any further justification. As said in the editorial, "this did not prevent them from submitting their plagiarized text to another well-known OR journal, namely the *European Journal of Operations Research*" Unfortunately enough, the 4OR editorial was published too late to prevent the publication of the present paper in RAIRO.

3 The plagiarized paper

The applied procedure for this kind of plagiarism is always the same: select and copy paragraphs and sentences from textbooks or research reports, and finally merge them in a personal form that is able to mislead the reader. The following references prove that the paper "A short note on marginal analysis of a transportation problem", published in vol. 43, n°4, pp. 331–337, has been almost entirely plagiarized:

1. The entire abstract after the first sentence is a verbatim copy of a paragraph from "Deterministic modeling: linear optimization with applications", a set of course notes by Hossein Arsham. The paragraph in question can be found at: <http://home.ubalt.edu/ntsbarsh/opre640a/partVIII.htm#rmarginalFactorPri>
2. The first paragraph of the introduction is taken from course notes posted by Tim Yeager at <http://sorrel.humboldt.edu/economic/econ104/marginal/>
3. The second paragraph is taken verbatim from <http://www.papercamp.com/essays/Decision-Making/3884.html>
4. Section 2 is a verbatim copy from K. Murty well-known textbook: http://ioe.engin.umich.edu/people/fac/books/murty/opti_model_junior-6.pdf
5. The first illustration of section 3 is taken too from Murty's book.
6. The first paragraph of the conclusion comes from the same source as the introduction.
7. None of the references are actually referred to in the paper.

We have asked the authors of the plagiarism to explain the situation and defend themselves. Their answer was that they found normal to refer to other research papers to present the concepts. They add that "A small misunderstanding is that the sources of the taken matter are not mentioned in the article. It never repeat again". We understand in their poor defence that they plead guilty and promise to stop plagiarizing, but the long history of frauds we have reported above shows that we cannot trust them and must ban them from publishing in RAIRO.

4 Conclusion

We hope that the plagiarism activities of Sreenivas and Srinivas will now definitively stop. The above plagiarized paper will be retracted from the electronic records of the RAIRO Journal. They are now banned from publishing in an international OR journal for the second time and their former attempts are now well referenced and diffused so that the whole community, from Transportation, Operations Research and Applied Mathematics areas, will have the right tools to foil their future submissions if any.

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Editorial from the Editor-in-Chief regarding this case of plagiarism
Philippe Mahey