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Abstract Information

Abstract Title: IMAGE TAMPERING
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There was a time when photographs were considered to be evidences of a deed, both in print and media. The reliability of photographs are in question because of the tampering, an easy task to do, courtesy the imaging softwares. In the biomedical field of research publications, images related to research (graphical presentations, photomicrographs, clinical presentation of pathologies etc.) are tampered to present them favorably. Minor modifications or editing, to improve the contrast or clarity is acceptable but morphing the images to the extent of manipulating the research finding, is way too far than what can be considered ethical. The case series we present here includes tempered photomicrographs, ulcerative lesions shown to have disappeared post treatment, intraorally placed modified
orthodontic device showing good results. We emphasize that in this paper we discussed exclusively, the image tampering per se and not image plagiarism. These situations were and an eye opener for the editorial. Among the numerous studies on research misconducts, the data on image tampering has been very less dealt with, even if so, it was not the sole research question and was presented only as a secondary outcome. Also, very few journals have clear guidelines or resolutions to deal with such articles. According to a study done on 399 journals (2012), only 38% had revealed in their websites about image manipulation among ethical misconducts. Many morphing detection tools have come up but are not embraced by many journals or publishers. It is time to give equal importance to image tampering as we give to plagiarism. Hereby, we also discuss internal policies that we have come up with, to deal with such issues.