

Plagiarism... How to Prevent it

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Abstract

Plagiarism is the wrongful presentation of somebody else's work or idea as one's own without adequately attributing it to the source. Most authors know that plagiarism is an unethical publication practice. Yet, it is a serious problem in the medical writing arena. Plagiarism is perhaps the commonest ethical issue plaguing medical writing. In this article, we highlight the different types of plagiarism and address the issues of plagiarism of text, plagiarism of ideas, mosaic plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and duplicate publication. The article explains what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

Key word: Plagiarism, paraphrase, Summarizing, Self Plagiarism, Mosaic Plagiarism.

Introduction

In this article, you'll see how to detect plagiarism and how to prevent it in your own writing. The objective of this article it will help you feel more confident in using and crediting academic sources effectively.

What is plagiarism?

It is a Latin *plagium* - means "kidnapping". It is intellectual theft. It is a *serious scientific misconduct*

Or

Presenting another's original thoughts or ideas as your own, using another's exact words without proper citation

Definition of Plagiarism:

"Plagiarism is the use of others' published and unpublished ideas or words (or other intellectual property) without attribution or permission, and presenting them as new and original rather than derived from an existing source. The intent and effect of plagiarism is to mislead the reader as to the contributions of the plagiarizer. This applies whether the ideas or words are taken from abstracts, research grant applications, Institutional Review Board applications, or unpublished or published manuscripts in any publication format (print or electronic).

Why do people plagiarize?

- ❖ Ignorance
- ❖ Lack of knowledge on the ethics of scholarly writing / poor writing skills
- ❖ Ambition, fierce competition
- ❖ Pressure from seniors

The Common Types of Plagiarism

There are different types of plagiarism and all are serious violations of academic honesty. We have defined the most common types below and have provided links to examples.

1) Direct Plagiarism

Direct plagiarism is the word-for-word transcription of a section of someone else's work, without attribution and without quotation marks. The deliberate plagiarism of someone else's work is unethical, academically dishonest, and grounds for disciplinary actions, including expulsion.

2) Self Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism occurs when a student submits his or her own previous work, or mixes parts of previous works, without permission from **all** professors involved. For example, it would be unacceptable to incorporate part of a term paper you wrote in high school into a paper assigned in a college course. Self-plagiarism also applies to submitting the same piece of work for assignments in different classes without previous permission from **both** professors.

3) Mosaic Plagiarism

Mosaic Plagiarism occurs when a student borrows phrases from a source without using quotation marks, or finds synonyms for the author's language while keeping to the same general structure and meaning of the original. Sometimes called "patch writing," this kind of paraphrasing, **whether intentional or not**, is academically dishonest and punishable – even if you footnote your source!

4) Accidental Plagiarism

Accidental plagiarism occurs when a person neglects to cite their sources, or misquotes their sources, or unintentionally paraphrases a source by using similar words, groups of words, and/or sentence structure without attribution. Students must learn how to cite their sources and to take careful and accurate notes when doing research. Lack of intent does not absolve the student of responsibility for plagiarism. Cases of accidental plagiarism are taken as seriously as any other plagiarism and are subject to the same range of consequences as other types of plagiarism.

Rules for proper research

In order that study had its purpose and effects, but also justify the intent and invested funds, it must meet certain postulates:

- Every scientific research from idea to written scientific article should go through certain phases: the review of the relevant literature on the topic of research, defining the objectives and hypotheses of research, sample selection for the study, implementation of research based on scientific methodological principles, statistical analysis, comparing the obtained own results with results of other authors published in scientific publications, conclusions and specific recommendations for any specific application in practice. Study design and project outline research are usually conducted by experienced researchers as mentors and by own work;
- Researchers and authors of scientific papers must follow the rules of the Ethics Code of Good Scientific Practice (GSP), primarily to follow the principles of honesty and integrity;
- Researchers rely on published data, and must be trained to selectively process the information, then, must be able to distinguish between original ideas and, finally, to have knowledge in order that their research results are compared with previously published in the scientific literature. In order to achieve and realize the above mentioned:

- Authors are required to follow ethical principles and stick to moral and legal regulations acceptable by the scientific community; Authors must properly cite relevant publications and cite facts and conclusions, or published or unpublished ideas and words of other researchers and authors. The reader should be clearly informed of the facts from the original texts of other authors, or of recycled articles from other sources (numerical marking, following Vancouver, the Harvard, APA, Pub-Med and other rules of citation of articles and other sources, for example: 2,9,14,15, etc.);
- Authors should properly cite references in their original form (the author(s), article title, abbreviated journal title, year of publication, volume editions, number, initial and final page of the published article, or the other sources in accordance to the order prescribed);
- Authors should use the knowledge acquired in the lectures, conferences or other sources of scientific and technical literature, provided that each source must include full bibliographic information;
- Authors must each citation in the text indicated in the bibliography at the end of the text and put it in quotation marks copied the contents of which have more than six consecutive words;
- Authors must obtain permission from other authors or publishers of scientific reproduction of protected materials (texts, images, charts, graphs, etc.) copyright;
- If the author re-used text or attachment as another author's own observations, then published in the article, in quotation marks, should be accompanied by a quote of recycled text, published in the primary source;
- Authors and coauthors must sign a declaration of originality and authorship which provides descriptions of contribution by each of them separately in an article that is going to be published;
- Every author of the publication must respect the rules of writing an article in which he/she wants to publish the article, considering that most journals have their own rules, but in line with the principles ICMJE, COPE, etc.

How to avoid plagiarism?

- ❖ If you have used a table, chart, diagram etc., cite the source directly below with a statement that permission has been obtained.
- ❖ DON'T copy word for word, or by copying and pasting.
- ❖ DON'T print directly (and turn in as your own work).
- ❖ DON'T copy from other students.
- ❖ **Summarizing:** Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) of one or several writers into your own words, including only the main point(s). Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material. Again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to their original sources.

Summarize when:

- You want to establish background or offer an overview of a topic
 - You want to describe knowledge (from several sources) about a topic
 - You want to determine the main ideas of a single source
- ❖ **DO paraphrase:** Paraphrasing means rephrasing the words of an author, putting his/her thoughts in your own words. When you paraphrase, you rework the source's ideas, words, phrases, and sentence structures with your own. Like quotations, paraphrased material must be followed with in-text documentation and cited on your Works-Cited page. (**Carol Rohrbach and Joyce Valenza**).

Paraphrase when:

- You plan to use information on your note cards and wish to avoid plagiarizing
- You want to avoid overusing quotations
- You want to use your own voice to present information

Conclusion

Plagiarism cannot be ignored, Poor quality and unethical research not only wastes time and money that could be spent on more significant and impactful projects, but faulty research also helps foster a distrust of the medical field, an area where trust is especially important, and can even result in patients receiving harmful treatments.

“The problem of plagiarism is a growing one. The only way that it’s going to be solved, as an ethical problem, is to have a lot more retraining both here and abroad,” Kim Mitchell said. It is only through a broad, concerted effort to reduce unethical research that the pace and quality of good research be increased and the public’s trust in the profession and its advancements be restored. Such efforts will only serve to improve the quality of care for patients and the general health of the public.

For these reasons plagiarism must be prevented at all levels of academic work from student papers to academic books.

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