



Joint Research Paper of Research Ethics and Plagiarism

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INTRODUCTION :

Research means a careful investigation and careful enquiry with an Endeavour to find relevant facts, which will be useful in the future. The purpose behind conducting research is to find solutions to a fundamental problem. If we have a quality research outcome, then it might lead to further improvements in the society, directly or indirectly. The basic aim and purpose of conducting research is to inculcate original thinking and analysis, but extensive copying and plagiarism counters such purpose. Not only pagiarism act as detrimental for the field of scholarship but it has been found that menace of plagiarism is prevalent among university students and it is affecting them in numerous tangible and intangible ways. Plagiarism is also regarded unethical because when a researcher forwards somebody else's work as his own original work, it might be regarded as a kind of fraud. It hurts the intellectual property right of the original owner, depicts disrespect of the researcher towards his peers and questions the integrity and honesty of the researcher. This paper is aimed at discussing the concept of plagiarism, its types, effects, reasons and how it affects the overall quality of a legal research. And in order to control plagiarism, it is very much essential to know the reasons behind it and then solving them in a systematic fashion. Besides plagiarism certain research ethics have been discussed because overall quality of a paper is directly or indirectly related to these ethics. Besides this, a researcher should strive for becoming an ethical researcher because then only he would be able to produce a good and quality standard research.

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is to find solutions to a fundamental problem. If we have a quality research outcome, then it might lead to further improvements in the society, directly or indirectly. Changes in society can be achieved through certain parameters and research is one of them; hence it is very essential that it should be conducted in a truthful and systematic manner. A quality research seeks answers to a definite question by using pre- defined procedure and techniques. Law has been regarded as a Tool for social change and legal research is a means to achieve the same. We generally conduct legal research because some aspects of a legal or socio- legal problem might have been left untouched or a particular problem needs reconsideration or in order to assess a different aspect of a particular problem. There might be intellectual ambitions behind conducting legal research, i.e. to understand the problem or to learn something new or to challenge yourself in new ways.

Research is generally divided into three categories and they are scientific research, Legal research and social science research. Despite categorization, the same basic ground rules apply to all the three areas of study. A legal research can be conducted by adopting a hypothesis and by the end of the research the hypothesis is either proved or disproved. A researcher might work alone or with other peoples, who might be associated with the same area of study or in case of inter- disciplinary people from different fields can also be engaged.

The basic aim and purpose of conducting research is to inculcate original thinking and analysis, but extensive copying and plagiarism counters such purpose. Not only plagiarism act as detrimental for the field of scholarship but it has been found that menace of plagiarism is prevalent among university students and it is affecting them in numerous tangible and intangible ways.

Various reasons are cited to define the fact that why students resort to copying, one of the reason is the Lack of proper awareness among the students about the plagiarism. Some students consider that information should be freely available and transmitted and hence intentionally disregard the concept of plagiarism. Lack of time can also act as a negative motivation for students to resort to easy methods like copying or even outsourcing their



assignment to paid online websites.

Plagiarism is also regarded unethical because when a researcher forwards somebody else's work as his own original work, it might be regarded as a kind of fraud. It hurts the intellectual property right of the original owner, depicts disrespect of the researcher towards his peers and questions the integrity and honesty of the researcher. In fact, the initial purpose of conducting research, i.e. to learn and to commit something new to the already existent knowledge, is corrupted. Not only does plagiarism harms the prospects of original author, but a person guilty of plagiarism has to face much criticism and under certain cases he might have to face severe penalties, both monetary and penal.

A plagiarized article is considered uninspiring, unreliable and of low quality and one incident of plagiarism might jeopardize the whole career of a scholar. However, with the initiation of internet era, plagiarism has increased manifold, because now material is available to the students with much ease, but the reliability of such matter is generally questionable.

The primary attributes of a quality research paper are that it is well written, structured, clearly indicating the purpose throughout the study, describing and justifying the data collection methods, clarifying the results and the most importantly it should be original and non- plagiarized. This paper is aimed at discussing the concept of plagiarism, its types, effects, reasons and how it affects the overall quality of a legal research.

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PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined by Merriam Webster dictionary as *“to use the words or ideas of other persons as if they were your own words or ideas”*.

In other words plagiarism can be understood as copying whole or a portion of work



belonging to other person, without acknowledging his original contribution. A particular work is plagiarized when a person presents a work as his original work, i.e., self generated, when in reality he has copied ideas or core text from other articles.

Plagiarism has been described as „*unoriginal sin*“ and „*cancer that erodes the rich legacy of scholarship*“⁴. It shows a non serious and disrespectful attitude of a student towards his course, professor and the institution. If a paper is plagiarized then the basic purpose behind framing a research paper is defeated and the standard of a paper is deteriorated.

Degree and form of plagiarism is not relevant and a single instance of plagiarism will make the whole paper plagiarized and while ascertaining plagiarism, intention of the author, whether bad or good, is irrelevant. Similarly, it is of least importance to consider that whether the original source was web based or library based. The *Harvard Guide to Using Sources* supports these arguments as it states that:

“It doesn't matter whether the source is a published author, another student, a Web site without clear authorship, a Web site that sells academic papers, or any other person: Taking credit for anyone else's work is stealing, and it is unacceptable in all academic situations, whether you do it intentionally or by accident.””

Types of Plagiarism

Although an act of plagiarism would be counted as plagiarism despite its form or degree, but still it has been demarcated into various types and forms:

Verbatim Plagiarism- This is the most visible and severe type of plagiarism, wherein a person copies text word by word, in an unaltered fashion from the original source and without giving a proper clear citation or credit to the original author.

Mosaic plagiarism or patch writing- If there is a blur between original author and your idea or in other words copying small ideas or few words from the original source and interlinking them with your idea, without properly acknowledging, which gives a



indication that the whole text is original, may amount to mosaic plagiarism.

Unintentional Plagiarism: When a researcher is following the authentic methods and sources, but omits to cite a source or when he paraphrase or quote poorly without citation, then also he would be guilty of plagiarism, although he did not had any intention to deceive or cheat.

Structure Plagiarism: In order to avoid verbatim plagiarism, many a time a researcher might paraphrase the original text and use the basic idea without citing the original author, then his act would be considered as structure plagiarism.

Self Plagiarism: If an author has generated a work on a previous occasion and later on use excerpts from that work without citing his own previous work, then he would be guilty of self plagiarism. If the writer wishes to explain the original idea in his own words, then he should acknowledge the author to whom that idea belongs or else it would amount to un-cited paraphrasing, which can be considered as a form of plagiarism.

Why Plagiarism Is Considered Bad

Generally a particular thing is considered if its existence brings undesirable or unpleasant situations or results. Plagiarism is termed bad because its existence weakens the threads of scholarly work and injures the prospect of research. Some of the logics that are forwarded to explain the

„bad“ nature of plagiarism are:

Reasons for committing plagiarism

Once it is known that a particular thing or situation is bad. We strive to know about it thoroughly, so that it can be avoided or eradicated in future instances. In case of plagiarism, the most debated questions is that what motivates students or writers to commit plagiarism. It is important to know because finding an answer to this question will lead us to the solution of countering the menace of plagiarism. Although traces of plagiarism can be found in various fields of study and even the highest ranks of scholars are not immune to it but it has been found that the most affected people are the research scholars and university students and most commonly reasons cited for plagiarism by



scholars and students are:

- (a) Lack of detailed awareness about plagiarism among students.
- (b) Many students consider that information should be freely available and transmitted and hence disregard the concept of plagiarism intentionally.
- (c) Lack of time can also be a reason for students to resort to easy methods like copying or even outsourcing their assignment to paid online websites.
- (d) If a student thinks that he incapable of writing a quality paper then he might incline to copy- pasting or paraphrasing.
- (e) Some students want to publish their articles at any cost and as a result they might steal ideas or copy edited or paraphrase text from articles published in reputed journals, to make their article look promising.

Mater Sociomed in has explained some possible reasons behind committing plagiarism as:

“Following trends of academic promotion and research funding, this entails the use of extensive text on the principle of “publish at all costs” or “Perish mantra”; Personal ambitions of poorly educated individuals; financial pressure.”

The next step in the direction would be fixing the problem and if proper measures are adopted, the risk of plagiarism can be minimized or at some point of time it might be completely eradicated.

How to Counter Plagiarism

"It's not necessarily bad intent," Tom Dee says⁷. "It's just bad practices." He conducted an empirical study⁸ on group of students before and after they were imparted tutorials on plagiarism and in the end it was found that once the students were made aware about the plagiarism, the plagiarism level declined sharply.

So it can be suggested that students should be first properly instructed about the contents, forms and other aspects of plagiarism before they are required to submit research writing.

Some of the suggested methods through which plagiarism can be countered are:

- Choosing a topic of interest, because being familiar with the topic, the researche will try to write in his own words and rely upon his own ideas.



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- At the academic front, proper awareness and understanding about plagiarism should be generated.
 - Paper should be formatted in a precise and uniform manner.
 - Students should be asked to submit at least two rough drafts, before the submission of final report.
 - Citing the source at the same time when a text is picked from a paper.
 - Try not to read a particular paper repetitively, because the researcher might develop inclination towards his ideas.
 - In case there is doubt with respect to citation, it is always advisable to give a proper citation.

Why plagiarism detection is important:

The basic purpose of research is to discover new facts or to understand the existing ones more holistically and the same goal is blurred or defeated if the scholar has resorted to plagiarism, instead of developing his own ideas or understanding.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and the same can be inferred from the real life examples of plagiarism and their consequences.

Harvard University student *Kavya Vishwnathan* was accused of plagiarizing her debut novel, *How Opel Mehta Got Kissed*. Later on she had to apologize and return the received royalties.

The topic of ethics and plagiarism is common to every academic discipline and professional career path. **Ethics** is defined as the moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conducting of an activity. We make ethical decisions in the workplace every day, including language that either supports or undermines inclusion and civility. Additionally, company resources and policies determine the culture and climate of an organization. In a professional setting, plagiarism refers to idea development. Whether you are presenting at a conference, conducting a research study, creating a menu for your



new restaurant, or designing a website for freelancing, it is necessary to accurately cite original authorship. **Plagiarism** is defined as the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. It is important that you avoid plagiarism and understand the consequences for trying to pass off someone else's work or ideas as your own. Indiana State University's Code of Student Conduct outlines the rights, responsibilities, and expectations that the university expects from all students. Section 2.0, Academic Policies, specifically addresses responsibilities of students in the classroom and has a section on plagiarism. The Office of Student Conduct and Integrity is the primary office on campus responsible for conflict resolution as well as addressing alleged violations of the Code.

Informed Learning

Your success as a student depends on Informed Learning

The kind of skills developed through Informed Learning are highly valued in every step of your education and beyond in your professional and personal life. Courses that include introduction and practice opportunities for student research greatly benefit students. Educators can foster a perspective and relationship between students encouraging involvement and their future in higher education. An academic article published in the Mentor identified "The Benefits of Undergraduate Research: The Student's Perspective" (2013).

1. Better understanding of published works
2. Better at balancing collaborative and individual work
3. Better at determining areas of interest
4. Better able to jump start careers in research
5. Discover passion for research
6. Gained experience in their career or field
7. Continue on to graduate studies and faculty positions



In the article, we learn that many undergraduate students are “overwhelmed by the academic process” and “do not really know what the research process is” (Madan & Teitge, 2013). Your introduction to Informed Learning has set you on a positive path with a student-oriented perspective on research.

Plagiarism is a major problem for research. There are, however, divergent views on how to define plagiarism and on what makes plagiarism reprehensible. In this paper we explicate the concept of "plagiarism" and discuss plagiarism normatively in relation to research. We suggest that plagiarism should be understood as "someone using someone else's intellectual product (such as texts, ideas, or results), thereby implying that it is their own" and argue that this is an adequate and fruitful definition. We discuss a number of circumstances that make plagiarism more or less grave and the plagiariser more or less blameworthy. As a result of our normative analysis, we suggest that what makes plagiarism reprehensible as such is that it distorts scientific credit. In addition, intentional plagiarism involves dishonesty. There are, furthermore, a number of potentially negative consequences of plagiarism.

The English word "plagiarism" comes from the Latin word "plagiarius" meaning kidnapper and the Greek word "plagion," meaning something that is not direct. ^[5]

To put it simply, plagiarism is the failure to acknowledge other colleagues' scientific work-their ideas, language, or data. It may include verbatim copying of passages without citing the original contributor, rewording of ideas, paraphrasing, and even total reproduction by simply changing the authors' names and trying to pass the material as one's own. While this is frequently done willfully, there may be genuine instances where the authors may be unaware that their actions can be dubbed as plagiarism.

The ORI describes plagiarism as "theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work. It does not include



authorship or credit disputes. The theft or misappropriation of intellectual property includes the unauthorized use of ideas or unique methods obtained by a privileged communication, such as a grant or manuscript review. Substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work means the unattributed verbatim or nearly verbatim copying of sentences and paragraphs which materially mislead the ordinary reader regarding the contributions of the author".^[3]

In 1999, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)^[4] defined plagiarism as, "Plagiarism ranges from the unreferenced use of others' published and unpublished ideas, including research grant applications to submission under "new" authorship of a complete paper, sometimes in a different language. It may occur at any stage of planning, research, writing, or publication: it applies to print and electronic versions."

How does Plagiarism Harm?

Berk^[9] called plagiarism as a "serious violation of collegial trust, the fundamental principle on which the integrity of medical journalism depends." He called it "deception and the theft of intellectual property." It harms the unattributed author's interest.

How to Detect Plagiarism?

Although it is generally difficult to detect plagiarism, advances in information technology are making it increasingly possible. One of the important responsibilities of a reviewer is detection of plagiarized text due to his/her familiarity with published material in his/her area of interest. Our journal's manuscript submission site now provides a plagiarism check facility for editors. Hence, each submitted article goes through this software to check for sentences that are copied from previously published articles. An article can be rejected at any stage of publication if it is found that sentences are reproduced without attribution to the original work. Worse still, if the same is pointed out after publication, an article can be declared as withdrawn.



Moreover, the availability of dedicated web sites designed to provide information on plagiarism (www.plagiarism.org) and software to detect plagiarism has made it easier for reviewers and editorial staff of journals to detect copying (www.ithenticate.com and www.turnitin.com). Frequently, authors try to pass off retrospective studies as prospective ones or deliberately omit references to earlier works. These are usually detected during the editorial process but fraud may still escape detection at times.

Dos and Don'ts of Plagiarism

Some simple tips to be followed are:

- attribute references
- describe all sources of information
- give acknowledgments
- provide footnotes
- use quotation marks wherever required
- paraphrase the original, attributed work
- for extensive quotations, obtain permission from the publisher of the original work
- avoid self-plagiarism by taking permission from the publisher of the previous article authored by you
- obtain permission for use of published drawings or other illustrations

It is of utmost importance to remember that all permissions have to be sought before the article is sent for publication.

"In a lifetime of reading, theorizing, and experimenting, a person's work will inevitably incorporate and overlap with that of others. However, occasional overlap is one thing; systematic, unacknowledged use of the techniques, data, words or ideas of others is another. Erring on the side of excess generosity in attribution is best." ^[10]



How to Deal with Plagiarism?

According to the code of conduct for editors as laid down by COPE: "If editors suspect misconduct by authors, reviewers, editorial staff, or other editors, then they have a duty to take action. This duty extends to both published and unpublished papers. Editors should first seek a response from those accused. If the editors are not satisfied with the response, they should ask the employers of the authors, reviewers, or editors, or some other appropriate body (perhaps a regulatory body) to investigate (in the case of their own editorial staff, they must conduct the investigation themselves)" ^[4] and take appropriate action.

First and foremost for editors is to distinguish between deliberate or accidental plagiarism. The repercussions of a false accusation of plagiarism can be devastating for the professional career of a scientist. Editors should, as a policy, ask for raw data for the editor's office to verify in case of an allegation. Besides helping adjudicate a matter, it would prevent stigmatizing genuine error. For complex cases, it may be appropriate to have a national body like the ORI in the USA help editors respond and judge cases. Plagiarism in all its forms needs to be exposed and universally condemned. The editors may also if they deem it fit advise a victim regarding his legal options-both criminal and civil.

Conclusion

The onus is on all scientists to increase education and awareness of ethical issues pertaining to scientific publications. Allegations of plagiarism should be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly with the help of systematic reviews and special software. If plagiarism is detected, an article may not be just rejected but the employer of the author/s may be informed and requested to take appropriate action. If published, the article should be retracted. Public disgrace would deter new and recurrent plagiarists. Institutions and professional associations should take cognizance of the act of plagiarism and initiate appropriate action.



Plagiarism is an ethical issue of considerable practical impact, affecting educational systems and research worldwide, but also influencing art, music, and literature. The academic discussion on plagiarism in basic education mainly concerns its frequency and explanation and potential countermeasures. Ethical aspects more often come to the fore in the discussions of plagiarism in research, particularly concerning plagiarism of text, where there is considerable disagreement. While plagiarism is frequently brought up as an important aspect of scientific misconduct in research ethical guidelines, and a variety of definitions have been offered in this context, such documents rarely reflect a deeper understanding of the concept, its relation to similar concepts, its embeddedness in specific practices, or its normative implications. More research on these issues is needed, although suggestions have been made as to how plagiarism should be understood, demarcated, explained, detected, normatively analyzed, and counteracted. One theme with an obvious global focus concerns the cultural dependence of attitudes toward plagiarism, for instance, whether differences in perception and practice can be explained by differences in relation to authorities. An important point for the future is whether or not present practices regarding plagiarism need to be changed in order to better promote progress in research.

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