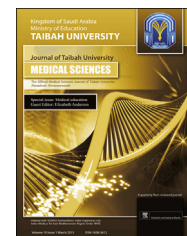




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Review Article

Plagiarism in medical scientific research



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المخلص

أهداف البحث: يعرف الانتحال بأنه "اقتباس كتابة أو عمل أو فكرة من شخص آخر وتقديمها كما لو كانت ملكا للشخص الذي اقتبسها". هذا ويعد الانتحال أكثر أشكال "عدم الأمانة العلمية" شيوعا في البحوث العلمية. يهدف هذا المقال إلى تقديم شرح موجز ووافي عن الانتحال العلمي، لرفع مستوى الوعي بجميع أبعاد المشكلة.

طرق البحث: تم استخدام الكلمات الآتية "الانتحال العلمي- أنواعه - كيفية اكتشافه- عواقبه" للبحث في قاعدة البيانات "Medline" عن المقالات المنشورة تحت موضوع الانتحال العلمي.

النتائج: تم الحصول على ما يربو عن ٥٠٠ مقال. قسمت المقالات إلى مجموعات، بحيث تختص كل مجموعة بأحد أبعاد الانتحال. تمت قراءة هذه المجموعات، وتلخيص أهم النقاط والمستجدات في كل منها. ووجد من البحث أن أهم أسباب الانتحال العلمي هو عدم معرفة ماهيته. وعندما تجتمع عدم المعرفة هذه مع ضيق الوقت، وضعف مهارة كتابة البحوث العلمية، مضاعفا إليها الضغط الكبير الذي يشعر به الباحثون بضرورة نشر بحثهم في مجلات علمية ذات سمعة عالمية طيبة، يقتبس كاتب البحث مقطوعات من بحوث الآخرين كما هي، مع ذكر أو عدم ذكر مصدرها، وهو بذلك يكون قد وقع في الانتحال العلمي. ولقد كان من الصعب في الماضي اكتشاف الانتحال العلمي في كتابة البحوث ولكن في

السنوات الأخيرة أصبح كثير من برامج الكشف عن الكتابات المنتحلة متاحا. يذكر هذا المقال كيف تستخدم المجالات والدوريات العلمية هذه البرامج للكشف عن الانتحال في البحوث. ويعد الانتحال العلمي من الناحية القانونية داخل المؤسسات الأكاديمية والتربوية "خيانة علمية"، تترتب عليه عواقب وخيمة.

الاستنتاجات: إذا كان الانتحال العلمي هو أكثر المشكلات شيوعا في البحث العلمي فإن حجر الزاوية في منع تفاقم المشكلة، هو رفع مستوى الوعي به وبكل أبعاده. ويعد عمل دورات تدريبية داخل المؤسسات الجامعية وتوفير برامج كشف الانتحال هما وسيلتين أساسيتين في منعه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الانتحال العلمي; نظرة تاريخية; أنواع الانتحال; كشف; عواقب

Abstract

Objectives: Plagiarism is defined as "the practice of taking someone else's words, work or ideas and passing them off as one's own". It is probably the most common form of scientific dishonesty found in research articles. The aim of this review is to present a comprehensive account about plagiarism to raise awareness of all aspects of plagiarism.

Methods: The key words "plagiarism", "types", "detection" and "consequences" were used to retrieve articles from the MEDLINE database.

Results: About five hundred articles were retrieved. Articles were divided into subgroups, with each group covering an aspect of plagiarism. Main findings and updates were summarized for each topic. The main reason behind plagiarism was found to be a lack of knowledge

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about the subject. When coupled with insufficient time, immature writing skills and the pressure on researchers to get their work published in good journals, authors take unacknowledged pieces of others' work and commit plagiarism. In the past, it was difficult to detect plagiarism; however, in recent years, many plagiarism-detection services and software programs have become available. The present article details how journals use these services and software as a helpful tool to check for plagiarism in submitted manuscripts. Within academia, plagiarism is an offense that can be devastating.

Conclusion: Plagiarism is the most common problem in research writing. The cornerstone in preventing this problem from getting worse is to raise awareness about how to cope with this growing problem of research misconduct.

Keywords: Consequences; Detection; Historical overview; Plagiarism; Types

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Historical overview

The word "plagiarism" was first described in English in the year 1601 by the dramatist Ben Jonson, to describe someone guilty of literary theft.¹ The act of plagiarism itself goes a long time back in history. Numerous cases of plagiarism exist in nearly every specialty in science. In astronomy, David King (a British professor of the history of science) found that many of the theories and models that were presented by the famous Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus in his famous book (On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres) actually were taken from the book of the Arabic scientist Ibn-Elshatir (The Final Quest Concerning the Rectification of Principles).^{2,3}

Writing reports and articles about plagiarism goes back to the late eighteen hundreds when the first article written by Halsted G.B appeared in "Science" in 1896 under the title "complement or plagiarism".⁴ Since this date, more than five hundred articles discussing plagiarism-related issues have appeared in the "Medline" databases.⁵⁻⁸

Terms and definitions

Plagiarism happens when one claims that an idea, or the expression of it, is his own when in fact it is someone else's. In dictionaries, plagiarism is defined as "The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own". It is also defined as "The use of another author's language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions, and or the representation of them as one's own original work without crediting the source".^{9,10} The word plagiarize comes from the Latin *plagiare*—to kidnap. A plagiarist is the person who commits plagiarism.

The size of the problem

Plagiarism is one of several forms of research misconducts that also includes the fabrication of results, falsification of data, misinterpretation of data, drawing certain conclusions and plagiarizing information or ideas within a research report.¹¹ Misconduct extends to include a breach of confidentiality and/or violation of authorship/publication.

In recent years, research has become a growing industry. There is fierce competition among more than 7.1 million researchers in the world to have their research published in over 25,000 journals. Researchers are under pressure to get their work published in good journals. When this pressure is coupled with a lack of time, lack of research skills and ease of obtaining information and articles from the internet, the rate of plagiarism increases.

In 2010, the Nature Publishing Group reported an alarmingly increasing level of plagiarism. Twenty-three percent of submitted articles are rejected because of plagiarism.¹² The prevalence of plagiarism varies from one community to another with reported rates from 11 to 19% in medical institutions.^{13,14} These rates increase where the concepts of intellectual property and copyrights are not well understood and are not strictly respected.

Types and forms of plagiarism

According to the intention, plagiarism can either be accidental (unintentional) or deliberate (intentional). Accidental plagiarism is usually seen among students and junior researchers. Unintentional plagiarism is mainly caused by a lack of awareness of the limits of taking data and pieces of writing from other sources. Another reason for unintentional plagiarism is a lack of skills for appropriately acknowledging data sources and citing others' work.¹⁵ Deliberate plagiarism usually takes the form of intentionally copying others' work and presenting it as if it is one's own. Copying large pieces of an article with the deliberate intent of deceiving the reader into thinking they are original is deliberate plagiarism. Legally, there is no distinction between intentional and unintentional plagiarism; both carry legal or financial penalties and can ruin a writer's reputation.¹⁶ Therefore, it is very important that one understand how accidental plagiarism happens and what to do to guard against it. One must check his/her own work before submitting it anywhere.

According to the nature of the plagiarized production, plagiarism can occur in many types, including plagiarism of ideas, text, designs, collusion, self-plagiarism, patch-writing and many others (differences are summarized in Table 1).

Plagiarism of ideas is very difficult to detect because of a lack of proof and because there is no tangible production stolen.¹⁷ An example that clarifies this form is when a researcher attended a presentation where he/she heard an interesting new research idea from the presenter. He/she then conducts research based on this idea and writes or presents the results as if it is entirely his/her own. Another example is when someone submits an article to a journal and his/her article is rejected for some reason, and one of

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