Text Recycling in Publication

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Text recycling or self-plagiarism is the copying of own past research content without proper citation. Preventing plagiarism will not be absolute zero but can be rationally minimized to an acceptable level. Core area of research publication is the similarity check.

Keywords. level of similarity, publication ethics, self- plagiarism

INTRODUCTION

Publication ethics is the rule of conduct to ensure scientific quality, public trust and source acknowledgement while publishing a research or scholarly work.[1,2] There are several publication misconducts in research publication like plagiarism, data fabrication and falsification, inappropriate authorship, duplicate submission/ multiple submissions, overlapping publication, and salami publication. Plagiarism is simply a cheating or copy-paste or non-acknowledgement of source, and text recycling is the self-plagiarism.

CONTEXT

Every component of a research article has its differential benchmark to label it as plagiarism. Some are acceptable with higher cut-off and some are not acceptable having lower cut-off. Introduction, methods and research tools have higher cut-off and result, discussion and conclusion have lower cut-off. Reference section is not eligible for its weightage.

Every research article will have introductory or background information prior to the description of an exact research carried out. This information may have common and general resources to cite with. Thus, this section with repeated information may not be significant; and the research or knowledge gap identified for the current research would be specific and different from those general information. Similarly, setting up of hypothesis or objectives may look similar in different research publications. Same applies to the methods section like research design, terms like inclusion and exclusion criteria, date and duration of study, sample size calculation, sampling method and statistical tools used because there are limited ways to describe it.

On the other hand, result should be quite different by default and the discussion should be based on this current result only. Thus, the discussion will have some repetition of other's findings to compare but not much. Even the tables and figures need appropriate citation and permission to get rid of copyright infringement.

MAGNITUDE

Plagiarism could be complete, substantial or minimal; and similarity checker will measure it in percentage. In general, 10-15% of similarity is acceptable unless it is not in block. There is zero tolerance in the core work that includes abstract, summary, hypothesis, observations, results, conclusions and recommendations. Plagiarism can be quantified in non-core areas and up to 10% could be accepted as per University

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ACTION

This is applicable to a research article as it might be considered in an external validity. Such a misconduct could be prevented or identified on time if plagiarism checking software is used during screening, reviewing or editing phase. There should be a clear instruction to author from each journal. There are two types of corrective measures like revision or rejection for publication during submission phase or retraction after publication. The procedural guideline to follow is as guided by COPE guidelines.[4,5,6]

CONCLUSION

Any type of plagiarism or publication misconduct is detrimental to the research quality. Once published, it will be the public property; that's why it needs to be adequately acknowledged even if it is own publication.

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