

## **PLAGIARISM AMONG RESEARCH STUDENTS: HOW TO AVOID IT**

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**Abstract**

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*“If you steal from one author, it's plagiarism; if you steal from many, it's research.”*

*Wilson Mizner*

*Plagiarism among research students is a serious issue that universities and academic institutions take very seriously. Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas, words, or work without giving them proper credit, presenting it as one's own original work. This unethical practice undermines the integrity of the academic community and compromises the value of research and learning. Universities often provide resources and support to help students understand and avoid plagiarism. They may offer workshops, online tutorials, or writing centers where students can learn about citation rules, referencing techniques, and strategies for avoiding plagiarism. It is essential for research students to familiarize themselves with these resources and actively seek guidance from their advisors or mentors when in doubt about proper citation practices.*

*This literature review explores the various types of plagiarism among students and find out the solution to avoid it. It examines various useful tools and techniques available online to make their research work free from the trap of plagiarism. The review identifies the main reasons and various types of plagiarism and find out some solution for research students to avoid the plagiarism. Study suggested various online anti-plagiarism software and tools to check the plagiarism and also suggest various citation or reference management software and tools like zotero, mandeley etc. to avoid plagiarism in their research work.*



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### **Introduction:**

The thoughts of a person are his own heritage, but the irony is that these thoughts are also copied, and others present them as their own ideas. This thing becomes even more crucial in the field of research, where a person after his in-depth study acquires such knowledge which

he wants to transmit to others and if someone else spreads this hard work in his own name, then it is very painful for that person, therefore plagiarism is a very useful tool to give credit and importance to the ideas of a person and provide freedom to communicate them.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and it applies to research students as much as any other individual involved in academic work. Research students, including graduate students and doctoral candidates, are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical conduct in their research activities.

Plagiarism refers to the act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, or words as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation. This can include copying and pasting text from sources without attribution, paraphrasing without giving credit, or even self-plagiarism, which involves reusing one's own previously published work without appropriate citation or disclosure.

Plagiarism among research students can have severe consequences. Not only does it undermine the principles of academic honesty and integrity, but it also compromises the trust and credibility of the research community. Universities and academic institutions typically have strict policies and guidelines in place to address plagiarism, and violations can result in disciplinary actions, including academic penalties, loss of funding or scholarships, and even expulsion from the program.

To avoid plagiarism, research students should be diligent in properly citing and referencing all sources used in their work. They should clearly distinguish their original ideas from the work of others by using appropriate citation styles, such as APA, MLA, or Chicago, depending on the field of study. Additionally, it is crucial for research students to develop good research and writing practices, including careful note-taking, critically analyzing and synthesizing information, and properly attributing sources.

Universities often provide resources and support to help students understand and avoid plagiarism. They may offer workshops, online tutorials, or writing centers where students can learn about citation rules, referencing techniques, and strategies for avoiding plagiarism. It is essential for research students to familiarize themselves with these resources and actively seek guidance from their advisors or mentors when in doubt about proper citation practices.

By upholding academic integrity and respecting intellectual property rights, research students contribute to the advancement of knowledge and maintain the integrity of their own work.

**According to the Oxford dictionary:**

“The process practice of using another person’s ideas or work and pretending that it is your own.”

**According to Randolph Community College’s academic policies:** plagiarism is “the use of another’s original words or ideas as though they were your own” (“Academic”). Instances of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following:

"Turning in someone else’s work as your own.

Copying a phrase, sentence, or passage from someone else or another source (Internet, print media, etc.) without proper citation.

Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.

Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation.

Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

Downloading or buying a term paper from the Internet and submitting it as your own work." (“Academic”)

**Examples of Plagiarism: (from Jamie Dendy)**

“Quoting someone's words from the Internet, a printed article, or an interview, without acknowledging the author.

Copying part of the content of a work into one's own paper without citing the source.

Copying or buying a paper and handing it in as one's own.

Falsely creating a citation that doesn't exist.

Failing to credit and cite someone else's thoughts or ideas when paraphrasing.

Paraphrasing in a way that relies too heavily on another's language or syntax.”

Plagiarism refers to the act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, or words as your own without giving proper credit or attribution. It can take various forms, including:

- 1. Copying verbatim or direct plagiarism:** Using someone else's exact words without quotation marks or proper citation. Example: Copying and pasting a paragraph from a website or book into your work without acknowledging the source.
- 2. Paraphrasing without attribution:** Paraphrasing without attribution refers to the act of rephrasing someone else's words, ideas, or work without giving proper credit to the original source. In other words, it involves rewriting a piece of content in your own words but presenting it as if it is entirely your own creation. Plagiarism, including paraphrasing without attribution, is discouraged for several reasons:

- **Intellectual property rights:** Authors and creators deserve recognition and credit for their original work. Failing to attribute the source denies them the acknowledgment they deserve.
  - **Academic integrity:** In academic settings, properly crediting sources is essential for maintaining the integrity of research and scholarly work. Plagiarism can lead to severe consequences, such as failing grades or academic misconduct charges.
  - **Misrepresentation of knowledge:** Paraphrasing without attribution can create the impression that you are knowledgeable on a subject when, in fact, you are relying on someone else's expertise.
  - **Ethical considerations:** Plagiarism goes against ethical principles of honesty, fairness, and integrity. It undermines trust and respect in professional and creative communities. To avoid paraphrasing without attribution, it's important to always provide proper citations and references when using someone else's work. This applies to written content, images, videos, data, and any other form of intellectual property. When in doubt, it's best to err on the side of caution and cite the original source. Remember that giving credit to the original author not only upholds ethical standards but also strengthens the credibility of your own work.
- 3. Failure to cite sources:** Failure to cite sources, also known as academic or source citation negligence, occurs when a person uses information, ideas, or materials from external sources in their work but fails to properly attribute the original creators or authors. This can happen in various contexts, including academic writing, professional reports, creative works, and online content.

There are several reasons why failure to cite sources is problematic:

- **Plagiarism:** Omitting proper citations can lead to unintentional or intentional plagiarism. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's work as your own, and it is a serious ethical violation that undermines the integrity of the academic or creative community.
- **Academic dishonesty:** In educational settings, not citing sources is considered an act of academic dishonesty. It hampers the learning process and prevents others from understanding the origin and validity of the information used.
- **Lack of credibility:** Properly citing sources strengthens the credibility of your work. It shows that you have done thorough research, respect the intellectual property of others, and are capable of supporting your arguments with reliable evidence.

- **Knowledge verification:** Without citations, readers are unable to verify the information you present, hindering the advancement of knowledge and potentially spreading misinformation.
  - **Legal consequences:** Failure to cite sources can lead to legal issues, especially when copyrighted material is used without permission or proper acknowledgment.
  - To avoid failure to cite sources, it is crucial to implement good research and writing practices:
  - **Identify sources:** Keep track of all the sources you use during your research, including books, articles, websites, interviews, or any other material that contributes to your work.
  - **Use a citation style guide:** Different academic disciplines and publications follow specific citation styles (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago). Familiarize yourself with the appropriate style and use it consistently throughout your work.
  - **Provide in-text citations:** Whenever you paraphrase or quote someone else's work, include an in-text citation immediately afterward, indicating the source of the information.
  - **Include a bibliography or reference list:** At the end of your document, list all the sources you cited in your work. This allows readers to find and explore those sources for further information.
  - **Seek permission if needed:** If you plan to use copyrighted material extensively or for commercial purposes, seek permission from the copyright holder and follow their guidelines for attribution.
- 4. Self-plagiarism:** Self-plagiarism, also known as autoplagiarism or auto-referencing, refers to the act of using one's own previously published work or substantial parts of it in a new publication without proper citation or acknowledgment. In academic and professional contexts, it is generally considered unethical because it can be misleading and can compromise the integrity of the research or the new work being presented. The main issue with self-plagiarism is that it violates the principles of academic honesty and originality. When researchers or authors present their previous work as new or original in a different context without proper attribution, it can mislead readers and reviewers into thinking they are presenting novel findings when, in reality, they are rehashing existing work. Self-plagiarism can manifest in various forms, such as:
- **Duplicate publication:** Republishing the same paper or article in multiple journals or conferences without indicating that it has been published before.

- **Salami slicing:** Dividing a single study into multiple smaller publications to artificially inflate the author's publication record.
- **Recycling text:** Reusing paragraphs, sections, or even entire papers in new publications without proper citation.
- **Republishing theses or dissertations:** Submitting one's thesis or dissertation as a series of separate articles or chapters without appropriate acknowledgment.

While it is acceptable to refer to one's previous work and build upon it in subsequent publications, it must be done transparently and with proper citation. To avoid self-plagiarism, researchers should clearly state any relevant prior work and indicate how the new publication contributes something novel or substantially different.

Academic institutions, journals, and publishing organizations often have specific guidelines and policies to address self-plagiarism, and violations of these policies can lead to severe consequences, including reputational damage and potential legal issues.

It is essential for researchers and authors to uphold high standards of academic integrity and always provide clear references to their previous work when appropriate, ensuring proper recognition of their contributions while avoiding self-plagiarism.

5. **Collusion:** Collusion refers to a secretive and often unethical agreement or cooperation between two or more individuals or entities to deceive, manipulate, or gain an unfair advantage over others. This collusion typically occurs in situations where the involved parties should be acting independently or competitively. The primary purpose of collusion is to undermine a fair and open market or decision-making process in favor of the colluding parties' interests. Collusion can take various forms and occurs in different contexts, including:
  - **Business and Competition:** In the business world, collusion among competing companies can involve price-fixing, bid-rigging, market-sharing, or restricting supply to manipulate prices and reduce competition. Such activities can lead to higher prices for consumers and hinder fair market competition.
  - **Academic Dishonesty:** In academic settings, collusion can occur when students collaborate on assignments or exams meant to be completed individually. It undermines the assessment's integrity and gives an unfair advantage to the students involved.
  - **Research Misconduct:** In the realm of research and academia, collusion can take the form of fabricating or falsifying data, sharing confidential peer-review information, or

colluding to publish multiple papers on the same research without proper acknowledgment or justification.

- **Politics and Governance:** Collusion can also be seen in politics and governance when individuals or groups secretly collaborate to influence decisions, manipulate election outcomes, or engage in corrupt practices.
- **Sports:** In sports, collusion might involve athletes, coaches, or officials conspiring to fix match results, engage in doping, or manipulate sports events for personal gain.

Collusion is generally considered unethical and illegal in many contexts. It can harm consumers, hinder fair competition, erode trust in institutions, and damage the reputation and credibility of the parties involved. Many jurisdictions have laws and regulations in place to prevent and penalize collusion, aiming to protect fair competition, integrity, and transparency in various industries and sectors.

6. **Unauthorized use of sources:** Unauthorized use of sources, also known as plagiarism, is the act of presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as your own without proper attribution or permission. It is a form of intellectual dishonesty and academic misconduct that is widely condemned in academic, professional, and creative fields. Plagiarism can take different forms and can occur intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of unauthorized use of sources include:

- **Copying and Pasting:** Using exact phrases, sentences, or paragraphs from a source without quotation marks and without giving credit to the original author.
- **Paraphrasing Without Attribution:** Rewriting someone else's work in your own words without acknowledging the source of the original idea.
- **Self-plagiarism:** Reusing significant portions of one's own previously published work without proper citation or without indicating that it has been published before.
- **Patchwriting:** Attempting to paraphrase a source but retaining too much of the original language and sentence structure without proper attribution.
- **Failure to Cite:** Neglecting to provide appropriate references to the sources used to support specific ideas, data, or arguments.
- **Ghostwriting:** Presenting someone else's work as your own, particularly in cases where the actual author's contribution is concealed.

The consequences of unauthorized use of sources can be severe and vary depending on the context. In academia, it can lead to academic penalties, such as failing grades, academic probation, or expulsion. In professional settings, it can damage one's reputation

and credibility and may result in job loss or legal action. In creative fields, plagiarism can harm an artist's career and lead to copyright infringement claims. To avoid unauthorized use of sources, it is essential to practice proper citation and referencing techniques. Whenever you use someone else's ideas, words, data, or images, you should give credit to the original source through appropriate citations and references. By acknowledging the work of others, you demonstrate academic integrity, respect for intellectual property rights, and a commitment to honest and ethical practices in your work.

**How to avoid plagiarism:** To avoid plagiarism and ensure proper citation and referencing, several tools and resources are available to help writers, researchers, and students maintain academic integrity. Here are some popular tools to assist in avoiding plagiarism:

1. **Plagiarism Checkers:** These tools compare your written work against a vast database of published material to detect potential instances of plagiarism. They highlight any matching content and provide similarity reports. Some well-known plagiarism checkers include Turnitin, Copyscape, Grammarly etc.
2. **Turnitin:** It checks your work against a large database of academic content and provides a similarity report highlighting any matching text.
3. **Grammarly:** It includes a plagiarism checker feature that scans your text for similarities with other sources.
4. **Copyscape:** It allows you to check if your content appears anywhere else on the web.
5. **Reference Management Software:** These tools help organize and manage your references and citations. They allow you to store bibliographic information and generate citations in different citation styles (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago). Popular reference management software includes Zotero, Mendeley, and EndNote.
6. **Grammar and Writing Assistance Tools:** Some grammar checkers and writing assistance platforms, like Grammarly and ProWritingAid, not only help with grammar and style but also offer plagiarism detection features to identify potential instances of unintentional plagiarism.
7. **Citation generators & reference managers:** These tools help create citations for various types of sources automatically. Users input the necessary information, and the tool generates the citation in the desired citation style. EasyBib and Citation Machine are well-known citation generators. Some important reference manager tools are:
  - **Zotero:** It helps you collect, organize, and cite your sources in various citation styles.



- **Mendeley:** It is a reference manager that allows you to generate citations and bibliographies in different styles.
  - **EndNote:** It helps you collect and organize references and create citations and bibliographies.
- 8. Paraphrasing tools:** Paraphrasing is an effective way to avoid plagiarism. These tools help you rephrase sentences and passages while retaining the original meaning. Some paraphrasing tools include:
- **Quillbot:** It uses AI to rewrite sentences while maintaining the intended meaning.
  - **Prepostseo Paraphrasing Tool:** It rewrites text to avoid plagiarism and generates unique content.
  - **Spinbot:** It is a free online tool that can paraphrase text by replacing certain words with synonyms.
- 9. Online Databases and Libraries:** Using reputable online databases and digital libraries, such as PubMed, Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, or JSTOR, can ensure you have access to a wide range of credible sources to cite and reference.
- 10. Style Guides and Manuals:** Familiarize yourself with the appropriate citation and referencing styles required by your institution or publisher. Refer to style guides such as the APA Publication Manual, MLA Handbook, or Chicago Manual of Style for specific guidelines.
- 11. Plagiarism Prevention Workshops and Tutorials:** Many educational institutions and organizations offer workshops, tutorials, or online courses on avoiding plagiarism. These resources can provide valuable insights into best practices for citation and academic integrity.
- 12. Critical Thinking and Proper Note-Taking:** Developing strong critical thinking skills and taking careful notes while conducting research can help ensure that you properly attribute ideas and sources in your work.

While these tools can be helpful, they are not foolproof, and it is essential to understand and practise proper citation and referencing independently.

**Conclusion:** For today's generation, especially students, many ideas from academics are readily available on the Internet so that they cannot anticipate them. There is nothing wrong with voicing scientific opinions to improve your research, but it becomes improper to give them on your behalf without attribution to reduce this serious form of plagiarism. Regardless of intent, plagiarisms is considered a serious ethical violation in academic and professional

settings. Always review and verify the accuracy of the generated citations and ensure that your work adheres to the required academic or professional standards.

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