

## **Ethics and Plagiarism: A Researcher's Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

Research ethics involves the application of fundamental ethical principles to research activities which include the design and implementation of research, respect towards society and others, the use of resources and research outputs, scientific misconduct and the regulation of research. This paper is visible to the learning of ethics, ethical principles, ethical practices and some documents/guidelines/code related to ethics in research. This overview will help to examine the ethical concerns associated with present research practices in the concerned discipline/ research domain, it is used to identify the ethical principles applied in our research domain, and also to develop and practice research ethics as a researcher. Every researcher wish to remain an ethical researcher and follow the research ethics in our practices. Various organization, professional/academic associations and research promoting bodies have come up with their research code of ethics. Plagiarism is knowingly appropriating another's original words and/or ideas and presenting them as one's own. Publication Misconduct is a set of unethical practices, which are observed by various research publishers and practitioners. These include fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, inappropriate authorship, duplicate/multiple submissions, overlapping publication, and salami publication. As per UGC Regulations, 2018 to promote academic integrity and to regulate the plagiarism, we must have realized the responsibility to avoid plagiarism is on both i.e. student and teachers. The additional responsibility is to orient your students to follow these regulations honestly and maintain the quality in academic writings.

***Key Words:* Research, Ethics, Plagiarism, Software, Academic, Integrity, Writing, Perspective**

## I. Introduction

Ethics is defined by various philosophers and practitioners in their unique. For some, these are "good or right conducts" whereas some treat these as "science of customs and morals". A researcher may be more concerned about research ethics, but before taking about it, researchers must develop the radical understanding about the ethics and moral judgement. This paper is visible to the learning of ethics, ethical principle, ethical practices and some documents/guidelines/code related to ethics in research. This overview will help to examine the ethical concerns associated with present research practices in the concerned discipline/ research domain, it is used to identify ethical principles applied in our research domain, and also develop and practice research ethics as a researcher.

## II. Branches of Ethics

The branches of Ethics are Descriptive Ethics, Normative Ethics, Meta-Ethics, and Applied Ethics.

**Descriptive Ethics** is an empirical investigation of people's moral beliefs.

The following deals with Descriptive Ethics.

- Study of people's beliefs about morality based on empirical investigation.
- The lifestyle of people in different communities.
- Records of certain taboos, customs, or conventions.
- Finding people's belief about values and their dilemmas about virtuous moral

### **Thrust of Normative Ethics**

- Normative Ethics offer the moral principles to resolve difficult moral decisions.
- Study of ethical theories, prescribing how people ought to act.
- Standards for the rightness and wrongness of actions.
- Proposes punishment when a person deviates from the path of ideals.
- It decides punishing a person who disturbs social and moral order.
- Effort to establish certain theories on the guidelines of certain norms.

### **Meta-Ethics**

Meta-Ethics is the study of what ethical terms and theories refer to.

- It determines the validity of theories advanced in Normative Ethics.
- We use certain moral concepts such as right, wrong, good, or bad to evaluate human actions.
- Meta-Ethics analyses ethical concepts.

- It examines the meaning of moral language and the metaphysics of moral facts.
- Meta-Ethics tries to understand the nature of ethical properties and evaluations.

### **Applied Ethics**

Applied Ethics deals with the problems confronted in routine life.

- It tries to apply ethical theory in real-life situations.
- It suggests using the knowledge of moral principles to present dilemmas.
- Certain issues arise due to the newly adopted lifestyle.
- Applied Ethics develops into Environmental Ethics, Media Ethics, Business Ethics, Ethics of Legal Profession, and Ethics of Care.

### **III. Measuring the Research Ethics**

Every researcher wishes to remain as an ethical researcher and follow the research ethics in our practices. Various organizations, professional/academic associations and research promoting bodies have come up with their research code of ethics. But, it may try to explore that, from where this concept has emerged and why is it so important in all types of researches?

There are a few landmark incidents in the history, which have shaped the present form of research ethics.

### **IV. Nuremberg Code (1949)**

A landmark document of medical research ethics, the Nuremberg code is an outcome of Doctor's Trials at Nuremberg, Germany at the end of World War-II. The court gave its verdict against twenty-three Nazi doctors and administrators, for performing horrified medical experiments on many war prisoners and civilians without their consent involving cruel tortures, brutalities, atrocities, and murders. They were held responsible for the deaths of thousands of concentration camp prisoners who died during and after horrific medical experiments.

### **V. The Milgram experiments (1963)**

Stanley Milgram, a psychologist of Yale University conducted a series of socio-psychological experiment in 1963, focusing on the conflict between obedience to authority and personal conscience. He was actually examining the justification given about the acts of genocide during the World War II, Nuremberg War Criminal trials, in which the strongest defence was that the doctors and other war criminals were only following the orders of the superiors. The biggest ethical criticism of this experiment was giving the electric shock to the subjects, ranging from 15 volts to 450 volts. This has exposed the participants to

extremely stressful situations. Many of them have shown severe signs of distress included trembling, sweating, stuttering, laughing nervously, biting lips and digging fingernails into palms of hands. Three participants had uncontrollable seizures, and many pleaded to be allowed to stop the experiment.

## **VI. Plagiarism**

A brief definition: Plagiarism is knowingly appropriating another's original words and/or ideas and presenting them as one's own.

### **Basic questions about Plagiarism**

- (i) Are the similarities between two texts or documents too numerous and/or precise to have occurred by chance
- (ii) To what extent is the supposedly plagiarized material truly original – or in the public domain, as common knowledge or as common language usage?

### **Formation of Plagiarism**

There are no universal forms of plagiarism as such. The published documents of various organizations/institutions, we will find that they have proposed different types of plagiarism. We will also be finding the use of different nomenclature for similar type of act or some common types in all of these. As there is no consensus on types or nomenclature of plagiarism. We rely on the types/names proposed by some prominent plagiarism detection tools.

## **VII. Plagiarism Detecting Software**

Plagiarism detection is the process in which one tries to find out the copyright infringement of any content. In this process, one takes help of plagiarism detection software.

**Open access/freely available softwares:** The softwares which anyone can use free of cost to check the content similarity or plagiarism in the written work. Some of the softwares are Dupli checker, Plagiarism, Copyleaks, Paper Rater, etc., which are being used to check plagiarism with certain conditions. These open access software's work on specific conditions to use freely.

**Commercial software:** These softwares are being used on payment basis. We can check the originality of our work. But there are certain organizations which purchase the license of software as institution or organization and allow to individuals/members to use in free of

cost with user designation.  
For example: INFLIBNET has subscribed URKUND and allow access to various universities and colleges freely through their libraries.

### **Turnitin software(www.submit.ac.uk) is a web-based plagiarism Detector**

It is used to,

- Serve as a deterrent against plagiarism.
- Give reports which can help identify occurrences of plagiarism.
- Give scholars students with a tool to identify and correct possible occurrences of plagiarism in their own work and improve their academic writing.

### **Working method of Turnitin:**

Students access and upload their work before the due date. Turnitin analyses the submitted work to identify text matches with other sources, completing task within a few minutes. Staff can also view the work that has been submitted and the work can be graded, commented, book marked by online itself.

### **Turnitin provides**

1. A similarity index, which indicates the percentage of the submitted paper that Turnitin has identified as being matched against other sources.
2. An originality report, which shows each of these matches in more detail, including the source(s) that Turnitin has found. These can be websites, books, journals and articles, or work that has previously been submitted through Turnitin.

Turnitin does not directly identify plagiarism; instead it provides a report that allows students and staff to see where plagiarism may have occurred. No student would be accused of plagiarism without a member of staff first reviewing this report in detail to verify that there are indeed grounds for such an accusation based on reasonable academic judgement.

### **VIII. Misconducts in Publication**

Publication Misconduct is a set of unethical practices, which are observed by various research publishers and practitioners. These include includes *fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, inappropriate authorship, duplicate/multiple submissions, overlapping publication, and salami publication.*

**FFP: Falsification, Fabrication and Plagiarism**

The three “**cardinal sins**” of research conduct are falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism, which are commonly referred as FFP.

Federal regulations define the essential elements of FFP in the following manner:

**Fabrication** is making up data or results and recording or reporting them. Fabrication is the construction and/or addition of data, observations, or characterizations that never occurred in the gathering of data or running of experiments. Fabrication can occur when “filling out” the rest of experiment runs, for example. Claims about results need to be made on complete data sets (as is normally assumed), where claims made based on incomplete or assumed results is a form of fabrication.

- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- **Plagiarism** is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. (45 CFR 93.103)

**IX. Predatory Journals, Citation Indexes and UGC-CARE****Predatory Publication**

*Predatory publishing generally refers to the systematic for-profit publication of purportedly scholarly content (in journals and articles, monographs, books, or conference proceedings) in a deceptive or fraudulent way and without any regard for quality assurance. Here, ‘for-profit’ refers to profit generation per se. Whereas predatory publishers are profit-generating businesses, some may conceivably pose as non-profit entities such as academic societies or research institutions. This is not to suggest that ‘for profit’ is, in itself, problematic but that these journals exist solely for profit without any commitment to publication ethics or integrity of any kind. -Cope Council (2019)*

Predatory publishers typically contact potential authors offer their services and encourage publication into offering academic conferences. To the researcher eager to make an impact with their work these can seem like very tempting offers but they often come with little academic reward.

**Grudniewicz, et. Al. (2019)**

A predatory journal’s website or e-mails usually exhibit contradictory statements, false impact factors, incorrect and/or misrepresented editorial board details, false indexing

details, and misleading claims about their peer-review process with an overall unprofessional and poorly drafted web page.

### **Avoiding Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is “showing someone’s work and idea as our own without giving proper citation or attribution”. It is a serious academic offence. Some people commit it knowingly or accidentally due to less awareness about the techniques to avoid plagiarism. When we write something in our academic writings, we need some ideas or words to initiate and to elaborate our writing. Many times, we add on or build upon the work of others and you might be using various information and sources to write something. We need to be aware that how we can effectively assimilate the information provided by the others in our work. In we adept the following Technique, we can avoid Plagiarism in an now.

### **Citation and Referencing**

Citation is the technique to give refence to the original source whose work, idea or information that are using in our work. It includes information about author, title of the work, date or year of publication and page number about the original author. Giving citation is the way to give credit to the original author, thus it is the best way to use others information in your work without plagiarism.

When we directly quote, paraphrase or summarize the essential elements of someone else's idea in your work, an *in-text citation* should follow. An in-text citation is a brief notation within the text of your paper or presentation which refers the reader to a fuller notation, or *end-of-paper citation*, that provides all necessary details about that source of information. Direct quotations should be surrounded by quotations marks and are generally used when the idea you want to capture is best expressed by the source. Paraphrasing and summarizing involve rewording an essential idea from someone else's work, usually to either condense the point or to make it better fit your writing style. You do not have to cite your own ideas, unless they have been published. And you do not have to cite common knowledge, or information that most people in your audience would know without having to look it up.

### **Regulations on Plagiarism**

In order to promote academic integrity in academic research, University Grants Commission (UGC), the apex regulatory body for higher education in India, has issued “**Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher educational Institutions) Regulations” 2018.**

## X. Role of the Researchers in Academic Integrity

As per UGC Regulations to promote academic integrity and to regulate the plagiarism, we must realize the responsibility to avoid plagiarism is on both sides i.e. student and teachers. The additional responsibility is to orient our students to follow these regulations honestly and maintain the quality in academic writings. Here are a few roles identified for students, please read and reflect on these roles.

## XI. Roles of researchers:

1. **Creative thinker:** Students should try always to be original; they need not to copy other's work. They should analyse the problem in order to explore the best possible solution.
2. **Understand the expectations of teachers:** When teachers give assignment to the students, they should try to understand that what are the expectations of the teacher in that particular assignment and how they can fulfil it in a unique manner.
3. **Be systematic:** Students should try to make rough draft of their answers first and read it again and again critically, analyse the answers, before finalizing it.
4. **Plagiarism check:** Before submitting the assignments, students should check similarities of work using plagiarism detection softwares. If they get similarities over the permitted limits, they should read and write again using proper citation and quotations.
5. **Paraphrase:** Students need to learn the art of paraphrasing by using different techniques like-changing the structure of sentence, using synonyms, start the sentence with different phrase etc to present their ideas without plagiarism.
6. **Updated Information:** Students should use recent sources and updated information in their assignment. Outdated information may lead to the suspicion of copy and paste.
7. **Focus on language:** Language is the medium to transmit the ideas to others. So, the language of the assignment should be clear, precise, simple and to the point. It should not have bias or dual meanings.
8. **Give references:** At the end of assignment, students should give full references of all in-text citations.
9. **Organized resources:** Resources play very important role in writing assignments. On the basis of resources and other information, students should try to build their



ideas and use them resources to support their ideas. So, resources should be organized systematically to avoid hassles at the time of writing.

## **XII. Conclusion**

This paper focuses on a researcher's perspective of learning ethics, ethical principle, ethical practices and certain codes related to research. It helps to examine the ethical concerns associated with research and to develop and practice ethics as a researcher. It shows responsibility among researcher about the offence of plagiarism and its consequences. Researchers Supervisors should have awareness towards plagiarism. Thus, developing information handling skills and exposure to attribute in their academic writings. Research Supervisors should motivate and encourage to their scholars for generating of new ideas and express them in their writing tasks.

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