



EDITORIAL

PLAGIARISM: A SERIOUS THREAT TO SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

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The term “Plagiarism” was derived from the Latin word “plagiarus” which means “kidnapper”. In layman terms it is defined as the practice of using someone else’s work as your own without giving credit to the original source. It is the most common form of academic dishonesty.¹

Publishing or presenting the study represents the last stage any scientific study and it is the result of several months of planning of the study, experimentation, observations, analysis. Any study done after maintaining the quality and research ethics should be reported to others as it becomes a source of information. The main reasons to publish is to validate and disseminate the work performed to other researchers, colleagues for academic development or for reviewing the studies conducted by others. In addition to provide new knowledge it also informs future researchers to conduct additional studies. In the developing countries like Nepal it is also a source promotion.²

Good academic research is dependent upon academic integrity and research ethics. Studies that aim to inform and bear original and significant findings, written in well-organized manner are mostly published. It should also be clear, accurate and concise. Authors should also write their scientific findings on the basis of ethical, moral and legal grounds. The researchers and academicians from developing countries in the path of publishing their scientific materials unknowingly plagiarize. The cause may be due to publish or perish pressure, lack of confidence of own writing skills and knowledge on ethics of scientific writing, many authors commit

plagiarism. Writing the manuscript in hurry and in the last stage of meeting a target is also a cause for plagiarism.³

There are various types of plagiarism such as direct plagiarism, mosaic form, self-plagiarism and accidental plagiarism.⁴ Whatever type of plagiarism we commit, it is a crime. Plagiarism, a ubiquitous issue at present time, is eroding the integrity and effectiveness of published articles and is tarnishing the dignity of individual and research group and/or organization. It also damages the trust placed by public in science. Ultimately, it leads to removal from a project, rank, reduction of salary, demotion. At times, it may lead to returning of the obtained research grant.

In order to avoid plagiarism, the best time to educate is from the student life. It is good to develop a habit of reading articles and to use own ideas and words to write, take good notes and have to cite the source we have used. Apart from this it is necessary to paraphrase by giving credit to original source. It is also necessary to educate yourself and others on ethics of writing, research integrity and its consequences. It is good to proofread the final version of the written manuscript again and again to ensure that all the sources that have been used are cited correctly before submitting to the journal and to use the plagiarism detecting software.^{1,2}

The best way to minimize plagiarism is through education and developing the habit of writing and providing credit to the original source. In spite of this, performing work based upon ethics and morality is the only way to avoid plagiarism.⁵

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