

Publication Misconducts

By

Asha Kumari

P.hD, Research Scholar

University of Delhi

Publication misconduct is defined as the unethical practices that one has opted during his/her research, publication and post publication.

It can also be defined as the bad, wrong and what ought not to be done in the context of research.

It is not misconduct if due to honest error and carelessness

The US office of research integrity defines misconduct quite narrowly as:-

“Fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reviewing research, on in reporting research result.

Types of publication misconduct:-

Plagiarism:- Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s thoughts, ideas, data, figures, research methods, or words without giving appropriate credit, or the overcitation of another person’s published work.

Fabrication: Fabrication is the practice of making up data or results without having performed relevant research.

Falsification: Falsification is the practice of changing data or results intentionally such that misleading conclusion is drawn.

Inappropriate authorship: Authorship is not appropriately assigned based on the author’s contributions.

Duplicate submission/multiple submissions: Duplicate submission/multiple submissions refers to the practice of submitting the same manuscript or several manuscripts with minor differences (e.g., differences only in title, keywords, abstract, author order, author affiliations, or a small amount of text) to two or more journals at the same time, or submitting to another journal within an agreed or stipulated period.

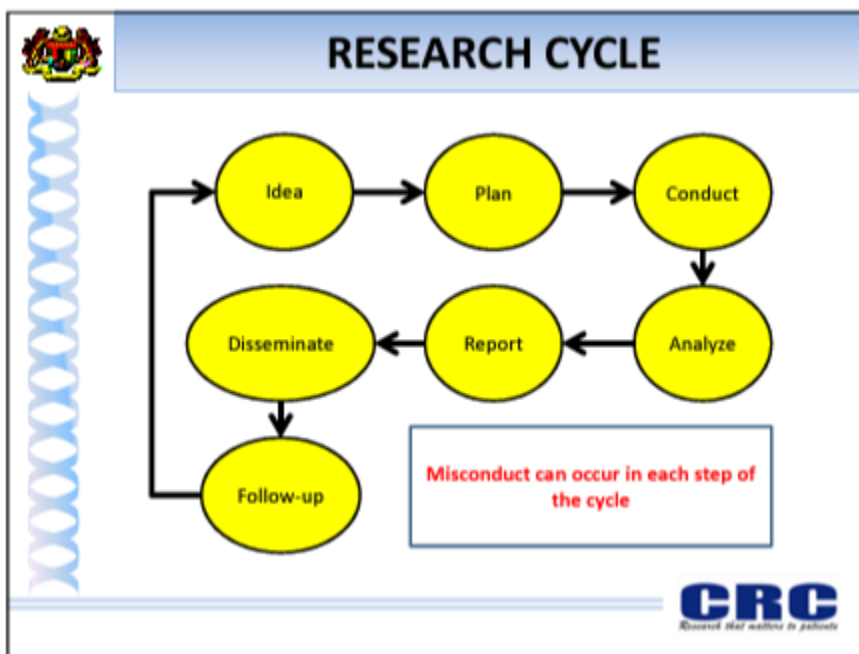
Overlapping publication: Overlapping publication refers to the practice of publishing a paper overlaps substantially with one already published.

Salami publication: Salami publication refers to the practice of slicing data from a large study, could have been reported in a single paper, into different pieces and publishing them in two or more articles, all of which cover the same population, methods, and question.

Inappropriate authorship: Authorship is not appropriately assigned based on the author's contributions.

Ghostwriting :

- Someone other than the named author(s) writes the manuscript for publication.
- Writer is not involved in the research and researcher(s) not involved in the writing.
- often done to mask incompetence of author(s)
- may mask influence or contributions of sponsors such as drug companies
- Usually involves element of financial fraud



Misconduct can be done by the following people:

Author: In case of authors unethical research, fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, selective reporting, Redundant publication, overlapping publication, multiple publications, ghost authorship, salami publication are the some different types of malpractices done by authors.

Co-Author:In case of authors unethical research, fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, selective reporting, Redundant publication, overlapping publication, multiple publications, ghost authorship, salami publication are the some different types of malpractices done by authors.

Editors: Editors may form biased decisions in the selection of articles by selecting a particular type of study for their publication. They may also do special kind of treatment for their friends or colleagues. Breaching of confidentiality is another type of misconduct that the editors do that can create a huge kiosk. Intentional delays for rivals is also a classic example of misconduct.

Reviewers:Types of misconduct reviewers commit might include: plagiarism (of ideas, text or data); undeclared conflicts of interest; breaching confidentiality; intentional delays

Publishers:

Types of misconduct publishers commit might include: plagiarism (of ideas, text or data); undeclared conflicts of interest; breaching confidentiality; intentional delays

Funders:

Types of misconduct funders might commit include: suppressing inconvenient results; delaying publications; not giving authors access to data; attempting to bias the presentation of findings; not disclosing their involvement properly

Causes of unethical behavior:

The following can be possible causes for the unethical behaviour.

- Desire to see voluminous Curriculum Vitae.
- Promotions and academic Development.
- Desire of Grant Sanctioning.
- Competition among colleagues.

- To prove professional supremacy.
- To become guide internal/external or external examiners.
- Authorship as a gift to seniors or family members etc.
- A person who uses his position of authority in order to be included as an author, regardless of not being thus qualified is referred as pressured authorship is called Pressurized authorship.

Effects of Misconduct:

Research Community: Misconduct may bring trust issues within the research community and may affect collaboration and contribution. It can also increase the disassociation by other researchers. If a journal retracts paper frequently the researcher may lose trust in that journal without even considering who is the real culprit.

Research Participants: Misconduct is going to destroy the career of a researcher. It may also affect the honest collaborators (like Author, Co-Author, Funding agency) by putting their reputation at stake and decreasing acceptability of future reports or publications. Institution's reputation also gets affected. It may also break the trust of the funding agency because it is unfair to the public money which the agency has used to fund the project.

General Public: In case a falsified or fabricated result gets published then it may harm the whole society. Like in medical journals, if the wrong result gets published then it is directly going to put the human race in serious danger without knowing the end result.

How can journals discourage and prevent misconduct:

By authors

Journals can discourage and prevent misconduct on the part of authors by providing information, raising awareness, and listing authors' contributions. They can ensure a requirement for conflict of interest disclosure, appropriate approval / standards for research and adherence to reporting guidelines. They can encourage post-publication debate and provide guidance on authorship. They can screen for plagiarism, redundancy and image manipulation.

By reviewers:-

Journals can discourage and prevent misconduct on the part of reviewers by requiring conflict of interest disclosure and explaining expectations regarding confidentiality.

By editors:-

Journals can discourage and prevent misconduct on the part of editors by having processes for handling editors' and editorial board members' conflicts of interest and publishing conflicts of interest for all decision-making editors

Responsibility of editors

Peer review is not generally good at detecting misconduct. Editors need to be alert!

- Don't ignore it or just reject the paper
- Consult the COPE flowcharts (available in the resources section)
- Discuss with publisher
- Consider taking legal advice

In most cases editors should NOT attempt to investigate cases themselves but should try to ensure that the appropriate bodies investigate the case.

Guiding principles

- Keep complete and accurate records
- Keep the case confidential as far as possible and don't spread unproven accusations
- Remain neutral - state the facts, do not make accusations
- Give the accused an opportunity to respond
- Inform everybody involved (eg all authors, funders, other editors)

Complaints and appeals

The text below describes how EES deals with complaints and concerns raised, and how authors can appeal to an editorial decision.

1. Nature of complaints considered:

Complaints may relate to a failure of process (e.g. delays) or a severe misjudgement (e.g. an improperly applied retraction notice). They may also relate to author or reviewer misconduct. Complaints may be made by anyone, including authors, reviewers and readers.

All complaints must be within the scope of the Rules and Regulations governing EES, and must be related only to the content, policies or processes of the journal. EES will not consider complaints where the complainant simply disagrees with a decision taken by the Editorial team

2. Process for making a complaint

Complaints should be emailed to insee.ees@gmail.com. Please provide as much detail as possible and include supporting information where appropriate (for example, copies of email correspondence).

If your complaint relates to a specific article, please include the title and DOI if it is already published and the manuscript ID number if it is unpublished (with copies of system generated email acknowledgement to the receipt of submission).

3. Process for handling the complaints

A formal acknowledgement of the complaint will be made within five working days. Every attempt will be made to provide a full response within four weeks. Otherwise, regular interim communications will be made, at least once in every four weeks.

Complaints will be dealt with by the journal office wherever possible, with reference to EES policies and guidelines, but will be escalated to the Corresponding Editor where necessary. The Corresponding Editor has the right to consult the other Editors or with any third party over the issue, and make a final decision. That final decision shall be binding, and the matter shall be deemed closed.

Where a complaint is made about an Editor, it will be independently investigated by one or the other two Editors. All complaints against the Editors be referred to INSEE President, in her/his role as Secretary, Advisory Board and then, be referred to Advisory Board or INSEE Executive Committee as s/he deems

appropriate. The purpose of the investigation is to establish that (a) the correct procedures have been followed in line with the guidelines and policies including Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement, (b) decisions have been reached based on academic criteria and (c) personal prejudice or bias has not influenced the outcome.

4. Complaints or concerns about author or reviewer misconduct

If you wish to complain or raise a concern about suspected author or reviewer misconduct, please refer to our Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement for more detail about our processes for dealing with allegations and the kind of evidence we might require. The process for raising these complaints and concerns is the same as above.

Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Suspicion of an ethical problem with a manuscript (including undeclared conflicts of interest, false ethical declarations, use of identifiable images without consent or use of copyright images without permission)
- Suspicion of unethical image manipulation in a published article
- Suspected manipulation of the publication process (including practices such as duplicate publication, self-plagiarism, salami-slicing or excessive self-citation)

We take allegations of misconduct very seriously and will investigate following established best practices in publication ethics.

5. Complaints about advertising

If you are unhappy about an advertisement you have seen in EES we recommend contacting the advertiser directly. If there is no response you can contact Advertising Standards Council of India.

You are also welcome to contact us through insee.ees@gmail.com. Generally, this will result in one of four outcomes:

- A. We may confirm that the advertising complies with Principles & Guidelines of the Advertising Standards Council of India that we follow and does not require any change.
- B. We may ask the advertiser to revise the advertisement.
- C. We may refuse to display advertising for the product in future.
- D. We may escalate the complaint to the advertiser or the ASCI.

6. If your complaint is not satisfactorily resolved:

If you do not feel your complaint has been addressed, you may wish to refer it further.

INSEE: Complaints against editors may be referred to the President of INSEE, the Society owning the journal through [insee.ees\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:insee.ees@gmail.com) with a copy to [insee\[at\]iegindia.org](mailto:insee[at]iegindia.org). Please note, however, that EES and INSEE abide by a strict policy of editorial independence. Complaints about editorial matters (rejections, retractions, appeals etc.) will be referred back to the Editors, whose decisions on such matters is final.

7. Appeals

We will consider appeals against the editorial decision only under highly specific circumstances and usually only where a clear breach of policy can be demonstrated or author can indicate a clear misunderstanding of the article by the reviewer

7.1 Rejected manuscripts

The most common reasons for rejecting manuscripts are:

- The article content is not within the scope of the journal;
- The article is not written in clear and intelligible English;
- The article does not conform to our Guidelines for Authors in terms of content, style and/or formatting.
- The article does not meet the journal's quality as per recommendations of reviewers and decision of the editor.

In the last three instances, articles are normally reopened to authors to allow changes to be made within a 8 week window. Failure to meet this deadline will result in automatic rejection of the manuscript.

We will not consider appeals against the Editor's decision under any of these circumstances.

It is the author's responsibility to provide the correct contact details, to monitor correspondence from our office, to respond promptly using the correct email address, and to comply with our requirements. Where a manuscript has been rejected because authors have failed to meet the revision deadline, a new submission is possible.

7.2 Rejection of revised articles

Revised articles will not usually be rejected provided they conform to our guidelines for revised versions. We will not consider appeals against the editorial decision to reject a revised article if it does not meet our requirements.

Authors whose manuscript has been rejected on other grounds may follow the appeals process if they wish to make an appeal, but note that Editors are unlikely to reverse their original decision unless significant new information is supplied or it can be demonstrated that our processes were at fault.

7.3 Retracted articles

Editors do not take the decision to retract articles lightly and will usually have conducted an extensive investigation before doing so. We will only consider appeals against retractions if substantial evidence can be provided to demonstrate that the decision was unjust.

7.4 Appeals process

Any appeals against the editorial decision must be made by email to insee.ees[at]gmail.com with a copy to insee@iegindia.org addressed to the Publisher within two weeks of the decision. You will need to provide a detailed explanation of why you disagree with the decision and include supporting information. You should also include the article title and DOI if you are appealing a decision to retract a published article and the manuscript ID number if you are appealing a decision to reject an unpublished manuscript.

We will acknowledge receipt of your appeal within five working days and it will be passed to the Editors for consideration. Wherever possible, the appeal will be considered by an Editor who was not involved in the original decision. The handling Editor will make a recommendation to either reject the appeal, request further information or uphold the appeal. We aim to resolve all appeals within four weeks. The editorial decision on these matters is final and we will not consider further appeals on the same grounds.

Adapted from, MedEdPublish, "Complaints and Appeals".

FFP

Known as the three “cardinal sins” of research conduct, **falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism** (FFP) are the primary concerns in avoiding research misconduct. Any divergence from these norms undermines the integrity of research for that individual, lab, university/corporation, and the field as a whole.

Falsification: Falsification is the practice of changing data or results intentionally such that misleading conclusion is drawn.

Fabrication: Fabrication is the practice of making up data or results without having performed relevant research.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's thoughts, ideas, data, figures, research methods, or words without giving appropriate credit, or the overcitation of another person's published work.

Use of plagiarism software like Turnitin, Urkund and other open source software tools.

“Plagiarism, the act of taking the writings of another person and passing them off as one's own. The fraudulence is closely related to forgery and piracy-practices generally in violation of copyright laws.”

In some of the academic enterprises like universities, schools and institutions, plagiarism detection and prevention became one of the educational challenges, because most of the students or researchers are cheating when they do the assigned tasks and projects. This is because a lot of resources can be found on the internet. It is so easy to them to use one of the search engines to search for any topic and to cheat from it without citing the owner of the document. So it is better and must all academic fields they should have to use plagiarism detection soft-wares to stop or to eliminate students cheating, copying and modifying documents when they know that they will be found.

What are plagiarism checking tools?

“Software that searches the Web for duplicate textual content. It may be a stand-alone program installed in the user's computer or a function of a website, such as www.turnitin.com. Universities increasingly use anti-plagiarism software to determine if students have copied someone else's prose, and writers use it to see if others are using their copyrighted work in full or in part”

Some of the plagiarism checking tools are:

1. Turnitin

Turnitin is a web-based plagiarism detection software provided by Turnitin.com. Turnitin is a tool to find and indicate the matching contents. Turnitin's Plagiarism prevention tool generates originality reports that show how much of a document is original, cited from other sources, or unoriginal. For students to identify their mistakes or weaknesses in citations so as to improve their academic writing skills. Compares with huge collections

of e-resources available around the world. Turnitin is used by more than 30 million students at 15,000 institutions in 150 countries.

Turnitin Coverages:

The major databases coverages of Turnitin

•Springer, EBSCO Host, ProQuest, Thieme, Elsevier, PubMed, Medline, Sage , Crossref, Oxford University Press, De Gruyter, Peter Lang, UCSanDiego

Sources (Electronic)

Internet sources publicly accessible

Published journals, books, proceedings, etc.

Student submission in turnitin

Sources which are not covered...

Unpublished articles/papers

In-house repositories

In-house database

Features of Turnitin

Easy to submit your papers, articles, book chapters, theses, and etc.

Find and get source of the matching contents

Instant receipt of submission

Feedback through same interface

and Useful for checking referencing before submission.

2 iThenticate

Like Turnitin, iThenticate works by comparing submissions to a content database containing billions of web pages (current and archived content), a repository of work previously submitted to Turnitin, and a collection of documents comprised of thousands of periodicals, journals, publications and CrossRef member content. Unlike Turnitin (similar software used at the undergraduate level), iThenticate does not save a copy of your document and it is not scanned into the software's database. This protects intellectual property while still allowing researchers to identify any errors in citation and attribution prior to submitting work to journals, examiners or other third parties.

How can iThenticate help you?

It is important to note that iThenticate does not check for plagiarism per se but rather for similarities between your work and the content database. It is expected that most submissions will have matches against sources in the database, particularly where quotes are used. Using iThenticate can help you:

- avoid inadvertent plagiarism
- prevent copyright issues from excessive use of your own or others' text
- comply with the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research

- develop personal judgment about acceptable practices of academic integrity

Urkund

URKUND is a completely automated system against plagiarism (Anti-plagiarism software) and is being successfully used at universities and colleges all around the world. URKUND's system checks all documents against three central source areas: a. The Internet b. Published material such as Journals, Books etc. c. Previously submitted student material (e.g. memoranda, case studies and examination works) URKUND Plagiarism Detection Software (by Ms Prio Infocenter - Sweden, eGalactic – India Partner) has been selected by INFLIBNET Centre (Inter University Centre of UGC) under the aegis of Ministry of HRD to enhance quality and prevent plagiarism in research/academic publications.

examples of research misconduct from India and abroad.

Jon Sudbo (1993-2005)

- Research into prevention of oral cancer at Norwegian Radium Hospital, Oslo
- 2005 paper in *Lancet* raised almost instant accusation of fabrication as it included 900 patients from database that didn't exist at time cited
- Also found that second image in a 2001 NEJM paper just enlargement of first
- Eventually 15 papers (plus PhD) retracted

- ☒ Fabrication
- ☒ Falsification



<http://tinyurl.com/sudbo11>

Gerald Schatten (2005)

- Corresponding author and senior scientist on 2nd Hwang paper
- U of Pittsburgh investigation found him innocent of fraud but said he "shirked" his responsibility to validate results
- Guilty of "research misbehaviour" not "research misconduct"



<http://tinyurl.com/schattem11>

- ☒ Irresponsible authorship

Raj Persaud (2003 & 2005)

- Celebrity psychologist appearing regularly on TV and radio (including own show *All In The Mind* on R4)
- 2003 book *From the Edge of the Couch* and various other writings including article on scientology
- Admitted plagiarism but claimed it was accidental due to pressure of work
- Suspended for 3 months



<http://tinyurl.com/persaud11>

☒ Plagiarism



EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

Vipul Bhrigu (2010)



<http://tinyurl.com/amesbhrigu11>

- U Michigan PhD student Heather Ames struggled to get expts to work in her own lab, but worked fine in boyfriend's lab
- Suspected PostDoc Vipul Bhrigu (inset) was sabotaging expts
- Set up concealed camera and caught Bhrigu adding ethanol to cell culture
- April 2011 pleaded guilty to destruction



<http://tinyurl.com/bhriguvideo>

☒ Fabrication (sabotage)

