



Research Paper

Publishing Misconduct: A Need of Understanding And Reduction

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ABSTRACT: Publishing should not become an end process of research but it makes a positive impact in the development of knowledge. Any unethical behavior relating to the publishing is called publishing misconduct. Publication misconduct makes all the efforts, time and money spent on research in vain and leads to detrimental effects with a high possibility of not repairable damages in the research world. If research was done wholeheartedly with academic honesty, it would have led to development of world as well as knowledge accumulation. Mostly societal issues demand most immediate and honest research outputs which are not met by plagiarised research publications and leads to loss of trust and confidence in the science community. When the course syllabus is concerned many of the educational courses are compelling students to publish articles during courses and may follow unscientific methods of publishing and are becoming victims of publication misconduct for the whole life.

KEYWORDS: Publishing, Publication misconduct, Plagiarism, Fabrication, Falsification, Self plagiarism, Salami publication.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Publishing is an important process after scientific research on a particular topic or a creative work. A researcher or scholar has to publish the work to get scientific communication among peers and to get the attention of the public. A research paper called articles has to be published only after completing the systematic and scientific research process. These scholarly and technically sound articles become the basis of future inventions of which will lead to the development of the entire society[1]. Before embarking on the publication process and the related misconduct we shall discuss the research process. The research process consists of series of actions or steps that starting from the identification of the problem and end in the solution to the problem identified or findings of the research work. The desired sequencing of the different steps is necessary to research effectively and the research process consists of several closely related activities [2]. At the end of the research work, the researcher has to communicate the results of the work with the world. This process of communication of the research work is called publishing or specifically called academic publishing.

Academic publishing is the process of making visibility for the work done by the researcher through printed media or in open access mode. The results of research work are making available to public or academically interested people by publishing. At the end of the research process, the researcher will produce some knowledge or important conclusion. These findings have to be published in a journal for the visibility of the academic community. So journals are just tangible artifacts of an intellectual community [3]. By publishing the research work, the researcher gets an opportunity to get the assessment of the work and appreciation [4].

There are different avenues available for academic publishing of a work done by a researcher or scholar. Each avenue has particular qualities, expectations, and restraints that lend itself to a particular type of work. The four primary categories are theses, academic journals, books, and grey literature. The theses are a type of publications that describe the detailed process of a major research work done systematically and it will require most of the time and energy of the researcher. Dissertation, capstones are different names for theses required for different programs based on the requirements specific to the needs of the discipline. Journal articles will be the bread and butter to academic work. In a "Publish or Perish" environment, they allow the researcher to deliver more concise, contained arguments. Journals are in different formats like print, online, subscription-based, open access, free for authors to publish, fees for authors to publish, and everything in between. Most

academic journals have a highly specialized or specific subject matter. A good journal will have peer review for the submissions and this will give credibility and ensure the quality of articles published in the journal.

Books are the appropriate format for making sustained arguments. Writing and publishing a book requires a substantial commitment to one subject or one argument. In books the writer(s) have the space to include all the background, complexity, and counter-argument that you need to support and converse with your work. The scholarly writing that has not been formally published, and instead, is printed out or posted on the internet is called grey literature. This includes handouts and power points at conferences, researcher notes, academic blogs, and other similar mediums [5].

Publishing work has two phases, the first one is the preparation of the manuscript for publication and the second part is the submission of the manuscript for publication. Preparation of manuscript is the sole duty of the researchers and the second part is the publishing work by different journals. Before the preparation of the manuscript, the researcher has to do the research work scientifically and systematically. The detailed reporting of the research work is called a manuscript. After the submission of the manuscript for publication, it has to go through two distinct phases of peer review and production. The peer review is organized by the journal editor and is complete when the content of the article, together with any associated images, data, and supplementary materials are accepted for publication. During the peer review, a manuscript has to be modified by the author(s) of the article following the reviewers' comments; this process is repeated until the editor is satisfied and the work is accepted. The production process is controlled by the publisher and in this process, the article is passing through copy editing, typesetting, inclusion in a specific issue of a journal, and then printing and on-line publication. Academic copy editing seeks to ensure that an article conforms to the journal's house style, that all of the referencing and labelling is correct, and that the text is consistent and legible; often this work involves substantive editing and negotiating with the authors. After the submission of the manuscript for publication, peer review and printing or on-line publishing takes place [6]. Dobusch, & Heimstädt (2019) describe three types of open-access journals as follows: (i) Aspirant journals – have low quality in terms of publications and peer-reviewers. Although they charge publication fees, profit is not their main goal and, hence, they are not predatory journals. (ii) Junk journals – profit is their main goal. Thus, they charge publication fees, the level of demand is low, and articles are accepted with minor changes. (iii) Fake journals – charge publication fees but the manuscripts do not undergo a peer-review process [7]. Publishing misconduct may arise on the part of the researcher and from the publisher. This article examines the different misconduct that arises from both the part of the publication. Any misconduct in manuscript preparation or publishing is against the research ethics or publishing ethics.

II. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research work is not confined to the boundaries of a country. It has a universal scope. The countries like United States of America and China are publishing more than 800000 technical and scientific journals. Several other countries are also on the path of increasing the no of articles publishing in the year [8]. There is a surprising rise in the publications and research students from Asian countries particularly China in the fields of science and engineering. This increases the need of understanding ethical guidelines and several misconducts that may be linked with the research work and the publication process [9]. Trustworthy, honesty, and academic integrity are important characteristics of researchers and publishers. This article examines the different misconduct that arises with academic publishing and the adverse effects of such misconduct. These articles also examine how to prevent such a type of misconduct.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To examine various forms of misconduct in publishing.
2. To examine the adverse effects of publishing misconduct.
3. To make an awareness about the different ways to prevent the misconduct.

IV. IMPORTANCE OF PUBLISHING

Academicians are the protagonist of the educational process because they are the discoverers and disseminators of knowledge. Some academicians conduct research work, while others busy themselves solely with teaching. Still, others have mastered the delicate art of balancing both teaching and research. An academician's value not lies merely conducting the duty as a teacher but also participate in the discovery of knowledge and the dissemination of the discovered knowledge. When the academician is solely a teacher, then they are only consumers of the knowledge that is discovered by some eminent persons. From this position, the academicians must be shifted to the constructors of knowledge. So an academician has to play multiple roles in connections with the educational process. Let us examine the roles of the teacher and contrast them with a lecturer who conducts research. A teacher uses a syllabus with textbooks as guides to teach and convey knowledge to students, aiming to ensure students' comprehension of the subject matter. A teacher's primary

focus and concern would be students' learning. For lecturers and professors, their main focus is often their field of expertise that they research and teach. Lecturers and professors seek to stimulate students thinking on their subject matter, by constantly questioning and providing new perspectives to a subject matter through research. Their focus would be discovering new knowledge and contributing to the greater body of knowledge. In terms of knowledge creation, researchers play a pivotal role in the academy in their systematic attempt to conduct research to provide answers to important questions, enhance knowledge and generate new applications from newly-discovered knowledge. These knowledge have to be published for the usage and benefits of humanity. Academic freedom offered to researcher provides the freedom to publish. Academics publish research that pushes the boundaries of knowledge.

Academic writing is important to the individual faculty member's status and degree of participation. For much of the academic staff, publishing is the determining factor in receiving the promotion, tenure, editorships, funding, and other perquisites [10]. According to Rowley and Slack (2000), the main reason academics publish is to allow more people to access their work and provide a platform to share new findings or ideas [11]. If there is no restriction on scholarly property rights or confidentiality, and the principal agrees, the researcher is free to publish. Publishing as a new researcher provides one with a better sense of personal achievement, improves one's writing and communication skills, contributes to a better resume, and garners recognition.

Teachers or educators, who are active in research, will acquire skills and knowledge which they can use to enhance their students' learning experience by delivering quality teaching sessions and encouraging knowledge sharing among students. By publishing a credible work by the researchers, the supervisors or funding agency can track the record the researcher which will help them to fund or to reward with appointments, promotion, tenure, or prizes. By publishing, the researcher can create a citation record and Consulting such a citation records in major databases is a more rapid and cheaper way to make such assessments than through peer review so citation profiles are increasingly important in determining careers. Many academics tend to publish in journals based on rankings, in journals reputed to have a higher impact than others. So they choose journals in which their articles will be peer-reviewed, published, and read by the communities of interest.

For getting citation one must publish the work. Valuable guides to scientific writing and publishing from experienced authors, editors, or teachers insist for the need of publishing in highly reputed journals. Both traditional and new guides share concerns for excellent presentation, sound scholarship, and clarity of style, encouraging people to aim consciously to write highly cited papers is concerning for five main reasons: (i) it narrows the scope of research undertaken or published; (ii) the focus on reward may reduce intrinsic motivation, innovation, and true collaboration but encourage mistakes and misconduct; (iii) despite substantial research, the significance of citations remains controversial; (iv) empirical evidence from several disciplines indicates that persistence, research specialisation, good methodology and publishing in germane journals are most important in developing a career and influencing a discipline, not the occasional highly cited paper; and (v) the convenience of citation counting may impede development or adoption of innovative new multivariate assessments of research productivity, including evaluation of wider social impact.

In highlighting the importance of research publications, Yuyenyongwatana and Carraher (2008) emphasised (i) the pursuit of knowledge; (ii) the extrinsic rewards to those publishing; and (iii) the increase in the prestige of the institution within which the publishing faculty is affiliated. According to Knight and Steinbach (2008), scholars across disciplines have substantial common interests concerning journal publishing, thereby strengthening the ties that unite academics seeking to publish, which inadvertently lead to a potentially high likelihood of future cross-disciplinary research, and a correspondingly robust environment for an intellectual exchange of information.

In the academic world, productivity is defined by the number of research endeavors conducted over a specific period, while the quality of research, which cannot be measured tangibly, is dependent on peer or expert reviews. The danger is that the wheel might be reinvented. A researcher's worst nightmare is to get stuck in the middle of their research, only to discover that the same work has already been done. To avoid this, researchers need to be constantly updated with the changes to the existing body of knowledge and new knowledge in their field of research. In addition to these, the following benefits or developments are obtained by academic publishing.

- Improves writing skill
- Helps in knowledge up-gradation
- Keeps me updated
- Teaches me about literature survey
- Makes me happy
- Creates a set of knowledge for others
- Appreciate my work
- Publicity to my work

- Adds value
- Keeps alive as a researcher
- Motivate others to research
- Gives chance to externally access my work.

V. PUBLICATION MISCONDUCT

Publication misconduct is one of the serious problems in connection with the research ethics which arise due to disrespect of intellectual property right of others who genuinely working for raising the academic and living standards. It includes plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, inappropriate authorship, duplicate submission/multiple submissions, overlapping publication, and salami publication [12].

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the adoption of another person's thoughts, ideas, data, figures, research methods, or words without giving proper credit to the work, or the over-citation of another person's published work. Plagiarism is the failure to ensure accurate citations which refers to 'the use of someone else's ideas or words without properly acknowledging the source, turning in an assignment verbatim for a class that you've already used for another class, borrowing ideas or work from others, and cutting and pasting information from a site without citing the source[13]. When one person takes the credit for the original ideas or thoughts of someone else is called plagiarism.

The Harvard Guide to Using Sources divides plagiarism into six categories: 1. Verbatim plagiarism: this is given when the writer copies word by word in an academic paper. 2. Mosaic plagiarism: that occurs when the writer copies pieces of information from a source or different sources and changes some words of the original one without paraphrasing or quoting properly. 3. Inadequate paraphrasing: this is given when the writer does not use his/her own words to relate the information or when his/her words are very similar to the source. 4. Uncited paraphrase: this occurs when the writer uses his/her own words to describe another writer's ideas, but the former does not cite the latter. 5. Uncited quotation: this happens when the writer uses quotation marks but does not credit the author of that source. 6. Using material from another student's work: this occurs when a student uses ideas that were given in discussions in groups and do not cite the group or classmate in a footnote [14].

Plagiarism is a hindrance to the goals of academic freedom, which is the pursuit of disseminating unblemished research. Plagiarism is one of the academic misconduct and it is found to be increasing due to a variety of reasons. Students seemingly have the notion that Internet-based information is public knowledge and thus, is free from intellectual property rights. As such, they do not seem to think that the information taken off the Internet needs to be cited for academic purposes. Due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of citing requirements, there have been high levels of unintended plagiarism, bogus referencing, and collusions [15].

To avoid plagiarism, researchers should adhere to proper citations and referencing to give credit to the original author and articles they cite. Text matching software, such as Turnitin can be of help, up to a point, in checking for potential plagiarism [16].

2.) Fabrication: Without properly performing the research work, if a researcher is manipulating the data and result, it is called fabrication. It will mislead the readers about the findings.

3.) Falsification: Falsification is the practice of changing data or results intentionally such that a misleading conclusion is drawn. It is the practice of changing the data or results intentionally such that a misleading conclusion is drawn. It is the changing or omission of research results to support claims, hypotheses, and other data. It includes the manipulation of research instrumentation, materials, or processes. Manipulation of images or representations in a manner that distorts the data or reads too much between the lines can be considered falsification.

Fabrication and falsification of data are considered one of the most common unethical behaviors. Falsification of data includes: data creation, selective publication of results, the omission of conflicting data, and the conscious exclusion or modification of data [17].

5.) 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.

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

7.) 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 [18].

8.) Inappropriate authorship: Authorship is not appropriately assigned based on the author's contributions. The person who takes intellectual responsibility for the research results is called the author (Day, 1998). Authorship is the process of deciding whose names belong on a research paper. In many cases, research evolves

from collaboration and assistance between experts and colleagues. Some of this assistance will require acknowledgment and some will require joint authorship. Responsible authorship practices are an important part of the research. Reporting and analyzing results is the key to applying research findings to the real world. Despite its vital role, authorship remains a murky and vague area for many scientists who frequently run into difficulty when deciding which colleagues should be listed as authors or co-authors, and which colleagues should instead receive an acknowledgment. Despite the challenges, researchers should familiarize themselves with proper authorship practices to protect their work and ideas while also preventing research fraud.

9). Text recycling /Self-plagiarism

Text recycling involves reproduction in part or whole of one's own previously published work without adequate citation and proper acknowledgment that is republishing the same paper already published elsewhere without full citation. It includes publishing excerpted work from a longer and previous without due and full citations, reusing data already used in a published work, or communicated for publication in another work without due or full citation. Breaking up a longer or larger study into small sections and publishing them altogether new work without due or full citation is also called self-plagiarism. It includes paraphrasing one's own previously published work without due or full citation of the original [13].

Other types of publication misconduct

Lack/ intended omission of negative results

In research, it is not assured that all the hypotheses drawn will give positive results. Some researchers sometimes intentionally omit the negative results and only publish positive results.

Data dredging or data snooping

A large amount of data are available in the information industry and it is increasing on day to day basis and the data is undergoing different process such as data cleaning, data integration, etc. the practice of data mining technique to show misleading results is called data dredging or data snooping is essentially a problem of multiple interfering

VI. STEPS TO AVOID PUBLICATION MISCONDUCT

1. Provide academic freedom

One method to avoid publication misconduct is providing academic freedom to academics and thereby knowledge creation and dissemination will properly take place. Academic freedom refers to the independence and autonomy given to academics to teach and conduct research in any capacity without being constrained by rules and regulations, thereby allowing them to discover and disseminate newly found ideas regardless of their sensitivity. Academics should be given the freedom to conduct research, publish, share and explore ideas, in addition to maintaining the quality of their respective institutions [19]. This will enable them to work without the interference of other individuals, authorities, and the government. This will help them to effectively focus on research that can generate, nurture and exchange ideas and knowledge more freely, without being confined to rules and regulations that might limit the scope of their work. Scholars and researchers should be granted the right to research without interference or suppression by their professional principles of intellectual rigor, scientific inquiry, and research ethics. They should also have the right to publish and communicate the conclusions of the research which they have authored or co-authored. This resonates with the very notion of education in the words of John F. Kennedy; 'the goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth [20].

2. Follow ethical principles

Every researcher should be aware of ethical issues and the consequences of these issues. These issues can be reduced or overcome by providing awareness and following ethical principles. The following is a rough and general summary of some ethical principles that various codes address

- a) **Honesty:** Strive for honesty in all scientific communications. Honestly report data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status. Do not fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data. Do not deceive colleagues, granting agencies, or the public.
- b) **Objectivity:** Strive to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing, expert testimony, and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required. Avoid or minimize bias or self-deception. Disclose personal or financial interests that may affect research.
- c) **Integrity:** Keep your promises and agreements; act with sincerity; strive for consistency of thought and action.

- d) Carefulness: Avoid careless errors and negligence; carefully and critically examine your work and the work of your peers. Keep good records of research activities, such as data collection, research design, and correspondence with agencies or journals.
- e) Openness: Share data, results, ideas, tools, resources. Be open to criticism and new ideas.
- f) Respect for Intellectual Property: Honor patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. Do not use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission. Give credit where credit is due. Give proper acknowledgment or credit for all research contributions. Never plagiarize.
- g) Confidentiality: Protect confidential communications, such as papers or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, trade or military secrets, and patient records.
- h) Responsible Publication: Publish to advance research and scholarship, not to advance just your career. Avoid wasteful and duplicative publication.
- i) Responsible Mentoring: Help to educate, mentor, and advise students. Promote their welfare and allow them to make their own decisions.
- j) Respect for colleagues: Respect your colleagues and treat them fairly.
- k) Social Responsibility: Strive to promote social good and prevent or mitigate social harms through research, public education, and advocacy.
- l) Non-Discrimination: Avoid discrimination against colleagues or students based on sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors that are not related to their scientific competence and integrity.
- m) Competence: Maintain and improve your professional competence and expertise through lifelong education and learning; take steps to promote competence in science as a whole.
- n) Legality: Know and obey relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies.
- o) Animal Care: Show proper respect and care for animals when using them in research. Do not conduct unnecessary or poorly designed animal experiments [21].

These ethical guidelines should be followed by each researcher and publisher to avoid misconduct.

3. Self-certification of articles should be made when they are submitting for publication.

4. Report of plagiarism checking software should be made compulsory.

5. The theses or dissertations should compulsorily be uploaded to Shodh Ganga.

6. Authors of different articles should keep their publications on institutional repositories.

7. Do not give unnecessary focus on Publishing and journal impact factors

VII. GIVE DUE IMPORTANCE TO CITATIONS

Citations refer to the basic unit measuring research output. They are regarded as an objective, or, a less subjective measure to determine impact, i.e. influence and importance. They are used in addition to, or as a substitute for, peer judgments. It's important to cite sources to show that the research is done properly by listing sources that are used to get your information. The researcher has to give credit to other researchers and acknowledging their ideas. Citation is important for avoiding plagiarism and to find out the sources for readers. Using the h index has several advantages like measures productivity, measures total impact, allows comparison of scientists of different ages [21].

VIII. GIVE DUE WEIGHTAGE TO QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY

Apart from journal ranking, the quality of research should not be solely dependent on impact, defined by [18] that is the number of times a researcher's work has been cited by others. The number of publications and citations received constitute what is known as the impact factor. Academics are considered influential by their quantity of publications and also the fact that their work is frequently cited by others in the field. The popular notion is that if one's work is not cited by others, the research is not attractive enough or has not produced new knowledge, thus having less impact. A piece of literature that has gained a higher number of citations tends to have a higher impact over others. In addition to meeting the requirements of quantity and quality, it is well-known that academics worldwide face pressure to publish in prestigious English language journals, with the journal impact factor being the most widely recognised indicator of journal prestige and influence. The impact factor was designed to assess journals indexed by the Web of Knowledge, and it measures how often an article in a journal has been cited on average per year. For journals within the same subject category, the factor indicates the journal's relative influence or impact. The impact factor reflects average citation rates for articles; a high impact factor shows that a journal is important in its field. Based on this, many scholars select journals in which they hope to publish.

IX. Conclusion

Plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and other types of publishing misconduct are increasing for a variety of reasons. The only way to avoid publication misconduct is by keeping academic honesty in every field of research by researchers and publishers. Publication misconducts are visible evidence of academic dishonesty

[22]. The two fragments of publishing, the researchers and publishers should join their hands to reduce these misconducts. For these researchers to do their work honestly and systematically and publishers to do their work fairly, Researchers should also be judged on the quality of their information and their contributions to the academic community as well as their ability to provide insight and advance knowledge. Not only do these factors enable the researchers to gain intrinsic rewards in the form of personal satisfaction and the uplifting of the intellectual standards of their institutions, but they are also able to contribute towards the betterment of society through sustainable dissemination of their findings, knowledge, and truth in their discipline. Instead of the concept of 'publish or perish', academics should follow 'persist and publish', and publish to accomplish, create knowledge. In short, researchers should not publish for the benefit of the university administrators, but the benefit of the research and academic communities, not forgetting the society at large [23]. If 'publish or perish' could be replaced with a more positive mantra-like 'publish to accomplish', and if publishing could be rewarded for its own sake and publications evaluated for their worth, academic publishing would become a much more rewarding experience. Every step to that taken to reduce the publication misconduct will help for the better advancement of research work and publication for the development of society.

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