

# EDITORIAL

## CUT AND COPY OK; BUT NO PASTE-DEALING WITH THE MENACE OF PLAGIARISM

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We are in a disarray, when someone ask us to paraphrase a single sentence. This, I observed in the last so many workshops conducted for training faculty members in literature review, research, and plagiarism. Nowadays, the culture of using google for educational purpose is prevalent, with more and more students and researchers using it for retrieving study material and articles. With this, there are more and more online and subscription based plagiarism checkers available. With the advent of these checkers, students have found ways of avoiding plagiarism. However, we, the researchers and faculty members are being trained in learning 600 muscle names, 206 bones names, 33 pathological processes, 660 drug names, more than 300 diseases names, but unfortunately, we have not been trained in writing analytical and reflective writing.

Plagiarism was not considered to be a menace until recently. People in academia have lost their jobs, teaching responsibilities, and promotions in the last 2 decades exclusively or partly because of either stealing other`s ideas or duplicating the research of others<sup>1</sup>. These events have occurred either on purpose or in ignorance. In response to these, the academic institutions have developed plagiarism standing committees to deal with these cases. Higher Education Commission (HEC) has introduced its plagiarism policy that is applicable to all academic institutions in the country<sup>2</sup>. The individual research journals globally have developed policies to avoid plagiarism by applying the “word similarity checkers” or other web-based tools.

While retrieving articles from search engines and databases is not a crime, but pasting the contents in our own documents as such and without quoting the original source is considered to be a fraud and hence “plagiarism”<sup>3</sup>. Although, the available online and subscription based, “so-called” plagiarism checkers are thought to be solving the problem of plagiarism, but actually, these are “word similarity checkers”. These

programs cannot check the duplication and stealing of ideas and paraphrased statements but just a group of similar words, statements, tables, figures or any other art. For identifying ideas and paraphrased contents, one needs to do a physical check of the document.

The answer to this problem is to collect other people`s ideas, researches and literatures and present it in a way that has an analytical touch of your own, while citing the sources in the meantime<sup>4</sup>. Students and faculty need to develop the skills of analytical academic writing. These steps include; developing a question before the start of a document, research paper, thesis writing, collecting the relevant documents by doing a literature search, skimming and reading the articles, thereby, selecting the proper articles and sources for review. A detailed study of final articles will develop deep understanding in the mind of reader, that is the first step towards academic and analytical writing.

This pre-writing stage is followed by 4 more steps while writing your own document from skimmed, read and studied documents; an introduction session, that will set the scene for further writing and reading by the others. The body, which consists of a few paragraphs, that consists of clarifying the concept, analyzing it and providing evidence for support of your ideas. Taking care of writing style, grammar, punctuations and paraphrasing is the third component of analytical writing. At the end, be prepared for writing a summary or conclusion, that consists of presenting your arguments in a global context, providing explanations, solutions and recommendations<sup>5</sup>. Don`t forget to read your essay a few times, cross checking with your peers and colleagues and present it in format that suits the site where you want to present<sup>6</sup>.

Paraphrasing and analytical writing per se, is considered to be a way of managing and avoiding plagiarism, but still one needs to cite the original source. Even the ideas have to be cited. Faculty and students who

are pursuing their careers in research, education and writing needs training on avoiding plagiarism. Individual organizations need to arrange such programs. These organizations also need to develop plagiarism standing committees to deal with such cases transparently. These collective efforts will enhance the awareness amongst the researchers and teachers to properly collect the resources, analytically present these, and at the same time cite the proper sources.

## REFERENCES

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**Dr. Farooq Ahmed**  
M.B.B.S / F.C.PS / M.H.PE  
Associate Dean Research and  
Director Medical Education, Khyber Medical College  
Peshawar - Pakistan  
Email: drfarooqahmed43@gmail.com