

# Plagiarism



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## Plagiarism and the Techniques to Avoid It Details: al Affiliation: Plagiarism and the Techniques to Avoid It

Scholars the world over often glance through the intellectual heritage of human progress for ideas while registering their appreciation of knowledge passed on to them. Indeed as it is, scholarship is all about an agitated quest for a much deeper understanding of what exists but seems elusive in the glare of public panorama. More often than not, the research endeavors that we [scholars] undertake “ borrow materials” already dulled upon, yet fail in many occasions to give credit to the pioneer users. Without a doubt, a huge chunk of the 21st century research is just but a patched art-work with little added value of originality; a definitive scenario that chops off a part of plagiarism controlled sphere into acceptance. Plagiarism occupies a peculiar ethical space in the field of academia. By definition, it refers to a deliberate appropriation and subsequent presentation of non-original ideas/discoveries as one’s own (“ What is plagiarism,” 2013). In fact, the University of Kent like many other institutions went elaborate with their definition to include class copying from colleagues (“ What is plagiarism,” 2013, par 1).

In the last several years, cases of plagiarism have grown in leaps and bounds, all courtesy of a ubiquitous digitization, whose adoption seems inevitable. The almost limitless access of information on nearly every conceivable topic online has even raised the suspicion among teachers as to whether their efforts in developing students’ critical thinking abilities really bear fruits. A study by Rutgers University in 2003 confirmed a risen prevalent rate of copy-pasting of materials from the Internet without proper citations that acknowledges the sources from across section of students and even the teaching assistants in the United States (Beasley, 2004).

Historically, the primary forum to combating plagiarism has been the educational institutions through their honor code programs. In almost all learning institutions, with few exceptions, plagiarism is an unacceptable offence strictly prohibited with heavy penalties. Such institutions have embraced a number of good academic practices, which includes paraphrasing and ethical copying (Gardner, 1999). Though written in own word, information gleaned from other sources should not only have the authors, but show a thorough understanding through point-explanations in addition to own comments. Such a show of knowledge and understanding goes beyond mere display of another person work through memorization and subsequent repetition. One can also avoid plagiarism by following certain rules of copying. Direct copying of whole paragraphs must rarely appear in own writing. In case such is unavoidable, one must use block quotes from a named author. For very short sentences used, the words copied must be marked clearly as quotations and acknowledged.

As a Human Service Provider, it would be prudent to avoid direct copying altogether. It not only shows lack of originality but also gives an impression of limited understanding. Paraphrasing with some explanations is comparatively preferable as it offers rare opportunities of expounding on a topic of discussion to an audience who may not be privy to an author's language.

It is disturbing to note that in spite of the many of campaigns against plagiarism, the prevalence rate of the vice is much higher today than any other time in history, more so among teaching assistants who are considered guides on avoidance of the same. It is almost right to claim that lecturers plagiarize more than their students by incorporating students' submitted

assignments into their research works without feeling any guilt. It would be a good idea to institutionalize a system to verify the same in institutions of higher learning.

#### References

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